

Post Conference Report on the Planning, Implementation and Impact of the 2009 Puget Sound Georgia Basin Ecosystem Conference

Final Report

1.0 Introduction:

Environment Canada (Canadian federal government) and the Puget Sound Partnership (Washington State agency) co-hosted the 9th biennial Puget Sound Georgia Basin (PSGB) Ecosystem Conference in Seattle, February 8-11, 2009.

This report describes the ecosystem conference series and its 2009 version, assesses how the 2009 ecosystem conference met its objectives, and poses questions about possible future directions for the ecosystem conference series.

1.1 *History of the Research (now Ecosystem) Conference Series*

The Puget Sound Georgia Basin (PSGB) Ecosystem Conference brand identifies a biennial interdisciplinary public conference series focused on the status of the transboundary PSGB region, pressures on the ecosystem and response approaches to emergent issues. The Research Conference (now Ecosystem Conference) series has been recognized by stakeholders as the pre-eminent interdisciplinary research conference focussed on the PSGB region. The 2009 conference moved from being a research conference to an *ecosystem* conference, recognising the event's emphasis on policy and management options in the region.

Prior to 2003, the research conference was focussed on the United States portion of the ecosystem, and was hosted solely by U.S.-based agencies. Five biennial Puget Sound Research Conferences were held between 1993 and 2001. Starting with the Georgia Basin Puget Sound Research Conference in 2003, Environment Canada has partnered with the Puget Sound Partnership (and formerly the Puget Sound Action Team, State of Washington) to deliver this transboundary, co-hosted event.

The conference typically draws scientists, First Nations and tribal government representatives, resource managers, community leaders, policy makers, educators and students together to share scientific information concerning the condition and management of the shared Puget Sound Georgia Basin region. The conference typically features plenary sessions with keynote speakers, concurrent sessions featuring oral presentations, poster presentations, workshops, frequent opportunities for informal networking, and related off-program events.

1.2 *Summary of the 2003, 2005 and 2007 Research Conferences*

i) At the **2003 Georgia Basin / Puget Sound Research Conference** – the first truly transboundary collaborative undertaking in the series – an international and multidisciplinary group of more than 800 scientists, planners, administrators, and others representing all orders of government, nongovernmental organizations, learning and research institutions, and communities gathered at the Westin Bayshore in Vancouver, British Columbia, from March 31 through April 3, 2003, to define and respond to the challenges facing the environmental health and ecological sustainability of the Georgia Basin/ Puget Sound region.

Canada's Minister of Environment, the Governor of Washington State, British Columbia's Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection, and First Nations/Tribal leaders gave their strong commitments to a shared approach to addressing the environmental and ecosystem concerns in this region.

The 2003 Georgia Basin Puget Sound Research Conference, in which Environment Canada joined the Puget Sound Action Team as co-host of the conference, represented a culmination of over a decade of dedicated relationship-building between Canadian and American interests. Since co-convening the conference in Vancouver in 2003, the conference location has alternated between Washington State and British Columbia.

ii) Over 850 persons participated in the **2005 Puget Sound Georgia Basin Research Conference**, held March 29-31, 2005 at the Washington State Convention and Trade Center in downtown Seattle. That event built on the highly successful 2003 Research Conference and five previous Puget Sound Research Conferences supported by the Puget Sound Action Team and its partners.

The 2005 Research Conference, subtitled "Science for the Salish Sea: A Sense of Place, A Sense of Change", represented the region's largest and most visible effort to communicate research on the condition of the Georgia Basin Puget Sound region. Conference themes included:

1. Science to define and understand the shared Puget Sound Georgia Basin transboundary region - its structure, function, traditional and societal characteristics; and,
2. Using science and traditional knowledge to address the changes facing the transboundary Puget Sound Georgia Basin ecosystem.

The conference program included approximately 300 technical papers, 100 posters, a Poster Gala, panel presentations, workshops and keynote speakers and an evening public session where local politicians and scientists discussed linkages between science and policy implementation.

iii) Over 900 delegates attended and participated in the **2007 Georgia Basin Puget Sound Research Conference**, convened at the Westin Bayshore Hotel and Conference Centre in Vancouver, March 26 – 29 2007. The conference program included three plenary sessions, thirteen concurrent sessions with up to six break-out sessions in each concurrent period, morning and afternoon networking breaks and daily luncheons.

The program included 164 poster presentations, 260 oral paper presentations, and 25 special sessions each having an average of four panellists.

Special features of the conference program included a keynote address by world-renowned fisheries scientist Dr. Daniel Pauly, a First Nations Plenary Session and a dinner hosted by the Squamish First Nation, an ambitious "Greening the Conference" agenda, an exhibit of paintings from the "Islands in the Salish Sea" collection, a Poster Gala and Film Festival, and off-program field trips.

Summary reports on the 2003 (Appendix 2), 2005 (Appendix 3) and 2007 (Appendix 4) conferences are attached to this document.

2.0 Overview and Analysis of the 2009 Ecosystem Conference

2.1 Intention

The 2009 Conference was planned using a different model than that which guided the 2003 through 2007 conferences.

The intention of the 2009 Puget Sound Georgia Basin Ecosystem Conference was to advance the shift in focus from a more traditional science research conference to one that focused on the interplay between scientific research and monitoring and the development and implementation of ecosystem management actions in a transboundary context. This shift led to the renaming from 'research conference' to 'ecosystem conference'.

This modified emphasis was evident in the Call for Proposal process and during the evaluation period. Session proposals that held scientific presentations alongside and integrated with policy and management presentations were favoured in the review process. To the greatest extent possible, sessions and plenary discussions examined the transboundary nature of the ecosystem.

In 2009, there was an effort to reduce the number of conference tracks and presenters within each session in order to accommodate the desire of past delegates for increased time to discuss and debate issues.

There was a minimum of one plenary session per day. The plenary sessions were designed to impart information about issues that all delegates needed as a baseline for understanding.

With the reduced number of presenters, reduced number of tracks, and the reduced number of days (from four full days of sessions to three days of sessions and half a day of tours and reception), there was significant pressure during the evaluation process to accept only those session and oral submissions that were a close fit with stated criteria.

In order to accommodate more scientific and policy research, there was also an increased emphasis on poster presentations, given the more limited availability of presentation time slots. In some cases, poster presenters were also specifically invited by session chairs to attend relevant panel presentations to add to interactive portions of the panel.

2.2 Themes

The 2009 Conference subtitle was "The Future of the Salish Sea: A Call to Action!". The conference objectives, built through a visioning process in June 2008 with the conference Advisory Committee, were to:

1. To promote a sense of place the Salish Sea, irrespective of political borders;
2. To **INFORM** participants about current scientific research and management techniques in the Salish Sea and to **MOTIVATE** participants to **ENGAGE** in needed research and actions;
3. To foster collaboration and understanding between scientists and policy makers
4. To transfer knowledge about successes and challenges of ecosystem management actions; and
5. To identify priority research and management approaches and foster a commitment to action.

The conference sub-themes, which shaped the program and proposal evaluation process, were:

- Air Quality and Climate Change
- Ecosystem Management Strategies and Techniques
- Habitat, Land Use, and Species
- Marine and Freshwater Resources

Process for Developing Thematic Content

A “Call for Proposals” was advertised through email channels and the conference Web site starting in August 2008. The Conference Advisory Committee identified a list of topics about which it specifically encouraged submissions. The submission process was significantly more involved than in previous years, as a series of questions were asked (*What is being done? What needs to be done? How can we get there?*) that emphasized the action-oriented theme of the conference. (See website www.psgbconference.org for the Call for Proposals)

2.3 Audience

PSGB conferences are characterized by a high proportion – approximately 50% - of the conference delegates either speaking or presenting during the conference. Thus the Call for Proposals issued in late summer 2008 also served as an advertisement for the conference itself. In addition, registration for the conference was advertised starting in November 2008 through email channels and the conference Web site. Following the method used in advertising the Call for Proposals, direct advertising using email targeted previous conference presenters and delegates, faculty and students at area universities, researchers and policy analysts in government agencies and regional non-governmental organizations.

Based on registration data from previous conferences, it was estimated that the audience would be made up of scientists, First Nations and tribal government representatives, resource managers, community leaders, policy makers, educators and students. In addition, it was estimated that 30% of delegates would be from Canada, and 75% of delegates would register for all three and a half days of the conference.

Given the short timeframe for conference organization (eight months from start to finish), the tightened conference program that would reduce the number of presenters (who are typically key components of the registrant list), and the fiscal restrictions of many organizations given the financial circumstances of late 2008 and early 2009, it was estimated that approximately 750-850 people would be in attendance. In the final conference tally, 1,179 people registered for part or all of the event.

2.4 Finances

The conference operates on an approximate $\frac{1}{3}$ - $\frac{1}{3}$ - $\frac{1}{3}$ revenue model, with equal proportions contributed by the co-hosts (Environment Canada and Puget Sound Partnership), conference registration fees, and co-sponsorships from partnering agencies.

In 2007, the total budget for the conference was initially estimated at \$300,000 (USD), but grew to \$445,000 (USD), largely as a result of an increase in registration revenues (and the automatic cost increases that larger registration numbers gives rise to), co-sponsorships which exceeded initial targets, and an increase in feature-specific co-host grants.

In 2009, the budget was initially estimated at \$375,000 (USD), but grew to over \$500,000 (USD), as a result of registration numbers that significantly surpassed expectations, significant financial contributions from supporting agencies, and an increase in Environment Canada's support of the event.

In June 2008, a *Memorandum of Agreement (MoA)* between the Puget Sound Partnership and Environment Canada detailed the financial and program responsibilities of the two parties. (This MoA is available for review through Environment Canada). Through this MoA, Environment Canada agreed to contribute up to \$50,000 (CDN) plus in-kind support for the conference. The Puget Sound Partnership also agreed to contribute \$50,000 (USD) plus in-kind support. Conference registration fees were expected to contribute \$100,000 CND. The co-hosts each pledged to secure partner sponsorship funds of \$50,000 (CND) each to assist with the cost of the conference. By February 2009, Environment Canada had increased its financial contribution to the conference from \$50,000 (CDN) to \$90,000 (CDN) and the estimate revenues from delegate registration fees had increased to \$150,000 (USD).

It is worth noting that when the agreement between Environment Canada and the Puget Sound Partnership was initiated, Canadian and U.S. dollars were roughly on par. By February 2009, there was an exchange rate of approximately \$1.22 USD to \$1 CDN, which had a significant impact on the conference budget overall. The risk of fluctuating exchange rates was not accounted for in initial budget projections. The transfer of funds from Canada to the United States meant an unanticipated loss of approximately \$14,000 (USD) in revenue.

2.5 Operations

The PSGB ecosystem conference brand is managed by the respective host agencies: the Puget Sound Partnership and Environment Canada. The conference management structure (see figure 2) centres on the conference co-chairs – one each for Canada and the United States, each appointed by the two co-host agencies. The two conference co-chairs jointly manage the conference and are responsible for its delivery. Each of the conference co-chairs reports to their respective agency (the co-hosts).

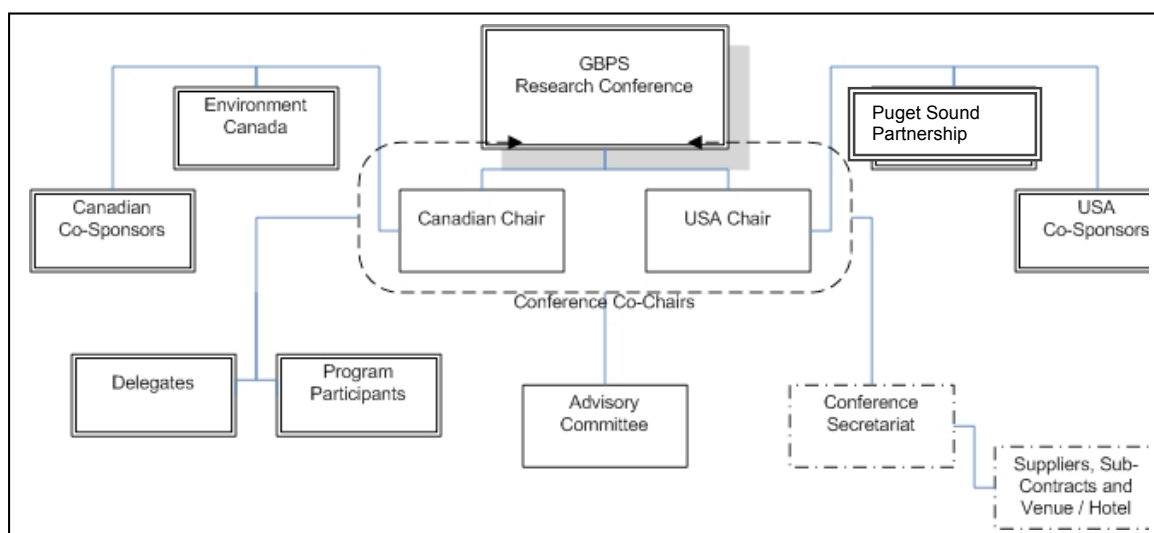


Figure 1: PSGB Management Framework

In 2009, the Canadian Chair was more intimately involved in the detailed planning and implementation of the event, along with a strong support team from the Puget Sound Partnership, University of Washington, and Environment Canada. The US Chair was involved in all strategic planning surrounding the event, but minimally involved in the day to day management due to conflicting work demands.

Co-sponsors are important stakeholders in the ecosystem conference, and their importance extends beyond their financial contribution. While providing co-sponsorship funds does not convey any decision-making authority, co-sponsors provide advice that complements that of the Advisory Committee. The conference also achieves heightened profile and legitimacy from having affiliated co-sponsors. The respective country co-hosts are responsible for soliciting co-sponsorship funds from potential donors based on the geographic location of the relevant office. The budget outlines sponsors for the 2009 conference.

An Advisory Committee was selected from among a list of past members, as recommended by past co-chairs, as well as from representatives of key regional organizations. Due to the short timeline for the project, there was no time to do an open invitation, as had been done in previous years. As the title implies, the Advisory Committee is responsible for providing advice to the conference co-chairs around the structure, focus and direction of the conference, but does not have any decision making authority. Traditionally, each co-host appoints an equal number of members to the advisory committee. In 2009, there were approximately 30 members on the Advisory Committee (15 each from Canada and the United States), each of whom participated to varying degrees in the planning and implementation of the event, ranging from simply attending one or more Advisory Committee meetings to becoming intimately involved in the review of proposals and/or planning particular elements of or events during the conference.

A conference secretariat is contracted to administer many aspects of the conference, including communication with presenters and delegates, management of the Call for Abstracts process, registration, layout and printing of the conference program and related documents, management of the sub-contracts required to deliver the conference, and arrangements with the conference venue and hotel. As in 2007, the 2009 Ecosystem Conference contracted with the Engineering Professionals Program at the University of Washington as the Conference Secretariat.

Lastly, the program participants and conference delegates (of which the participants are a subset) represent a key stakeholder group. As noted in the opening plenary session, “the conference really is a product of the people who attend, who work to develop posters, presentations, and sessions, to share their knowledge and push for change in the way we think and do business in this region.” The PSGB Ecosystem conference is particularly focussed on its audience, and the design of the program and the delivery of the conference reflect that.

The number of important stakeholder groups – co-hosts, co-sponsors, advisory committee members, presenters and delegates – gives rise to one of the key challenges facing the direction and design of future conferences: just who “owns” the PSGB brand, who are the clients, and to whose interests will that direction and re-design respond?

2.6 Other

As Environment Canada was in a period of transition from the Georgia Basin Action Plan into the next proposed ecosystem-based initiative in British Columbia and the Puget Sound Partnership was at the end of a challenging process to develop the Action Agenda for the Puget Sound, the co-chairs were both aware of the importance of the conference with respect to the future of their respective initiatives, as well as being cognizant of the impact of the conference beyond the current life of the host organizations. This awareness not only influenced efforts with respect to program design and conference delivery, but also led to greater emphasis on outreach and action.

3.0 Implementation

3.1 Venue

When Environment Canada and the Puget Sound Partnership confirmed their intent in May 2008 to co-host the 2009 conference, all venues in and around Seattle capable of accommodating 800 or more participants were contacted to determine availability.

The Washington State Convention and Trade Center (WSCTC) was the only facility with dates available in the first half of 2009. The 2005 conference successfully convened at the WSCTC, which made Environment Canada and the Puget Sound Partnership confident that it would be a good choice for the 2009 conference.

The only available options for four-day periods of time at the WSCTC were to hold the conference in February 2009 or May 2009. The decision was made to hold the event in February, so that it could be accommodated within the Canadian fiscal calendar (that ends March 31st) and so that it would not conflict with the British Columbia provincial election in May 2009.

In hindsight, it would have been advantageous to allow more time for the planning and execution of the conference (at bare minimum one full year is required for planning the event) and to pull it out of the Washington State legislative session, which runs from January to April in odd calendar years. These issues should be seriously considered in future iterations of the conference.

A contract was negotiated with the WSCTC in May 2008. This contract covered space rental and modification, food and beverage minimums, and standard contractual terms.

Greening the Conference

As in 2007, the conference Advisory Committee sought to green the conference as much as possible. To reduce the impact of conference-related activities on the environment, the conference organizers adopted the following key initiatives:

- Working with the Washington State Convention and Trade Center's catering department to reduce waste, compost and recycle food and beverage materials, and select organic and locally-sourced foods wherever possible.
- Making the conference "climate friendly" with carbon offsets donated by Offsetters.com.
- Selecting a LEED-certified facility, the Hyatt at Olive 8, as the official conference hotel.
- Providing the conference abstract book on a flash drive made of renewable bamboo in order to reduce paper waste.
- Purchasing delegate bags made of 85% post-consumer recycled plastic with the support of Metro Vancouver's Zero Waste Challenge.

Hyatt at Olive 8, the official LEED-certified conference hotel (see Greening the Conference), accommodated approximately 450 paid guest nights over the conference, and agreed to offer the state per diem rate (\$158 USD) to conference participants. The overall experience with the conference hotel and convention center was positive, although there were some remarks about the costs for catering being high in comparison to the quality of the food.

The conference co-chairs relied heavily on the advice and expertise of the University of Washington conference management staff to interpret the contract and negotiate with the hotel and the conference center. As noted in the report for the 2007 conference, although the services of the UW conference management staff were extremely helpful, the disconnect between the conference co-chairs and the hotel and convention center resulted in some administrative challenges in tracking expenditures and purchase orders.

3.2 Development of the 2009 Conference Program

3.2.1 Early directions

In March 2009, the Coastal and Ocean Task Force, a joint effort between British Columbia and the State of Washington, held a meeting wherein Jay Manning, the head of the Washington State Department of Ecology, met with the Deputy Minister of the Environment at the time (Joan Heskin) and discussed possible topics for the 2009 Puget Sound Georgia Basin Ecosystem Conference. They called for a conference that addressed the most pressing trans-boundary ecosystem issues and that was set up in such a way that recommended actions could be identified and reported upon at the next Puget Sound Georgia Basin Conference.

Conference planning began officially in May 2008 under the joint direction of Environment Canada (Bronwen Geddes as Co-Chair) and the Puget Sound Partnership (Chris Townsend as Co-Chair).

3.2.2 Development of Conference Themes and Objectives

The Conference Co-Chairs agreed to move forward with a “Call to Action” format as recommended by the Coastal and Ocean Task Force. The Co-Chairs developed a list of Advisory Committee members that included new and returning members representing a diverse set of trans-boundary interests, including federal, state and local government, academia, non-governmental organizations, and tribes and First Nations. Advisory committee members met in late June and adopted the following conference theme and objectives:

Conference Theme: The Future of the Salish Sea: A Call to Action!

Conference Objectives, as developed in the Conference Outline distributed to Advisory Committee members, were identified as follows:

1. To promote a sense of place in the Salish Sea, irrespective of political borders
2. To INFORM participants about current scientific research and management techniques in the Salish Sea and to MOTIVATE participants to ENGAGE in needed research and actions
3. To foster collaboration and understanding between scientists and policy makers

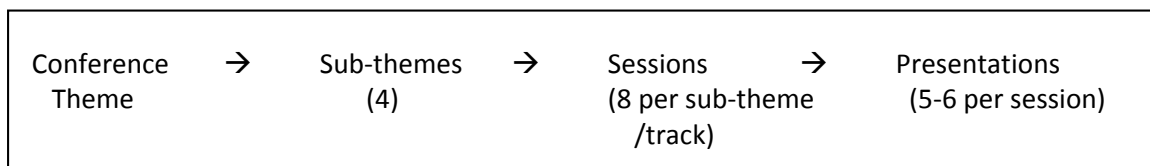
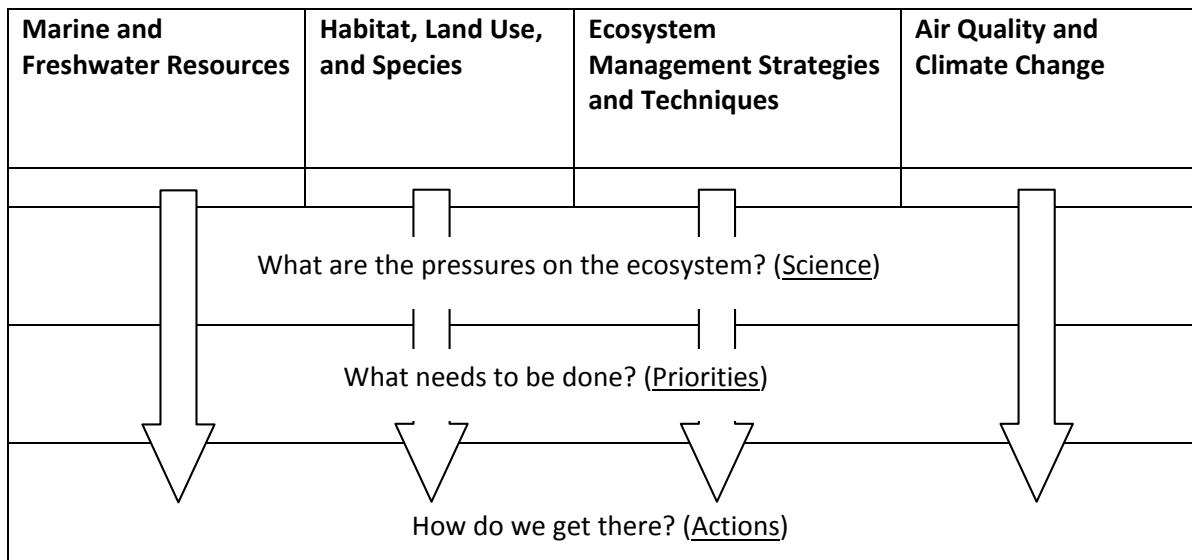
4. To transfer knowledge about successes and challenges of ecosystem management actions.
5. To identify priority research and management approaches and foster a commitment to action, in accordance with direction from the Coastal Oceans Task Force

3.2.3 Development of Conference Sub-themes

Sub-themes reflect priority topic areas for which further near-term research is needed, as identified by the Puget Sound Partnership's goals and topic forum papers and the priorities of the Georgia Basin Action Plan. At the first Advisory Committee meeting, the following sub-themes were identified:

1. Marine and Freshwater Resources
2. Habitat, Land Use, and Species
3. Ecosystem Management Strategies and Techniques
4. Air Quality and Climate Change

Within each sub-theme and each session, three main questions were proposed. The first question allows exploration around the current state of the ecosystem by topic area. The second looks at what is being done to address the pressures on the ecosystem, including relevant science, policy, tools and outreach. The final question seeks options for actions required to instigate positive change.



3.2.4 Development of the Call for Abstracts

As with previous conferences, one of the main challenges in developing the program was balancing inclusivity and breadth with control over volume and clear thematic focus. At the second Advisory Committee meeting, the group attempted to address this dilemma by developing a list of recommended priority topics for each sub-theme, to be included with the Call for Abstracts. The idea was to encourage submission of proposals that would address the identified topic areas.

The Call for Abstracts requested both full session (90-minute) and individual 15-minute oral presentation proposals, with a preference for full session proposals focusing on the identified topic areas.

The Call for Abstracts was released on August 13, and the proposal deadline was October 10. There were 71 full session proposals and 320 oral presentation proposals received, the largest number of proposals submitted at any Puget Sound Georgia Basin conference to date (for the 2007 conference, there were 260 oral presentation proposals and full session proposals were not solicited).

There was agreement among Advisory Committee members that, based on feedback from the 2007 conference, the following adjustments should be taken into consideration when requesting the Call for Abstracts and evaluating proposals:

- 1) Fewer concurrent sessions – evaluations from the 2007 conference indicated that the large number of concurrent sessions was overwhelming, and participants were often forced to choose between competing tracks relevant to their research interests.
- 2) More consideration in the selection of session topics – several participants who filled out evaluations at the 2007 conference recommended that more thought be put into which topics were highlighted at the 2009 conference. The Advisory Committee agreed that topics highlighted at the 2007 should be given a lower priority, and “hot topics” as identified by the Puget Sound Partnership and Georgia Basin Action Plan should be given high priority.
- 3) More science-policy linkages – it was also agreed that full sessions which clearly connected science to policy and thus provided opportunities for policy recommendations in the Call to Action should be given top billing.
- 4) Fewer presenters in each session / more time for discussion – participants at the 2007 conference agreed that many sessions did not allow sufficient time for questions and answers, and that fewer, higher quality presentations should be included with each session.
- 5) More plenary sessions – several 2007 conference participants indicated a desire to see additional plenary sessions that would help frame the conference theme and provide relevant context to the overall audience.
- 6) Shortened conference length – due to delayed scheduling of the Convention Center, the venue was only available for three consecutive full days, which cut the conference short by one full day and allowed for less full sessions.

3.2.5 Abstract Review Process

Advisory Committee members volunteered for review subcommittees structured around the four conference sub-themes: Marine and Freshwater Resources; Habitat, Land Use, and Species; Ecosystem Management Strategies and Techniques; and Air Quality and Climate Change. Strong

selection groups were formed with approximately eight to 12 Advisory Committee members and subject area experts on each review subcommittee.

On Oct. 20 and 21, Review subcommittees participated in conference calls to identify trends in submissions, including topics covered and gaps, outline challenges and successes in the review process to date, and to discuss the path forward for the final review process and adopt general review criteria for each sub-theme. The following general review criteria were approved by all subcommittees:

- Proposals that reflect the conference theme, "The Future of the Salish Sea: A Call to Action!" and provide forward-looking content that will help set priorities for action in the region.
- Proposals that show thoughtful data collection that can be used for improved management of the PSGB region.
- Proposals that demonstrate new, innovative approaches – to research, to linking policy and science, to solving problems, etc.
- Proposals that are applicable or transferrable cross-border (mix of U.S. and Canadian proposals).
- Proposals that include a high-quality (clear, compelling, well-developed) abstract.
- Proposals on unique topics (to ensure overall diversity).

Proposals within each subtheme were then divided among review subcommittee members, who were each asked to review a set of assigned proposals via an online review system prior to the Advisory Committee meeting focused on proposal review. Reviewers were asked to provide an "Overall Decision Recommendation" response for each proposal (i.e. Priority Accept, Accept, Marginal Accept, Reject, Poster Accept), based on the general review criteria listed above.

On Oct. 29 and 30, the Advisory Committee participated in a proposal review meeting at Huxley College of the Environment at Western Washington University in Bellingham. Two different review subcommittees met concurrently each day (Air Quality and Climate Change/Marine and Freshwater Resources on Oct. 29, and Habitat, Land Use, and Species/Ecosystem Management Strategies and Techniques on Oct. 30). Each review meeting focused on the following agenda items:

- Background to conference design and approach
- Ranking process overview
- Sub-theme group session to discuss initial ranking results
- Small group work (2-3 people); each group reviewed a set of proposals based on the initial ranking process
- Final ranking of submissions and recommendations for high priority sessions.

3.2.6 Proposal selection and conference program development

Following the Advisory Committee review meeting, the Conference Co-Chairs and staff developed a consolidated list of recommended sessions, which was sent out on Nov. 6 to subcommittee members for final review and comment. Feedback was taken through Nov. 9.

On Nov. 10, the UW Conference team began sending e-mail notifications to oral presentation and full session applicants regarding proposal status. Conference staff drafted separate letters for oral presentation proposal applicants and full session proposal applicants. Several applicants

in both of these categories were asked to present posters due to the high number of proposals received and other evaluation considerations noted above. Several full session proposal applicants were also asked to reduce their 90-minute proposals to 15-minute oral presentations.

Due to the more directed nature of the session recommendations made at the review meeting, Advisory Committee members, Co-Chairs and conference staff worked to modify and refine full session proposals and combine groups of oral presentation proposals into cohesive session groupings. Over the next several weeks, responses were received from applicants and questions fielded by the UW Conference team, Co-Chairs, and Conference Staff.

In early December, Advisory Committee members identified session chairs. A draft conference program was developed and circulated for initial review on Dec. 5. The conference Co-Chairs worked iteratively to develop the program structure, placing recommended sessions across eight concurrent periods during the three days of the conference. Initially, there were four main tracks proposed, each corresponding with one of the four conference sub-themes, as well as one track to include workshops and panels. The Co-Chairs eventually decided to add an additional track to accommodate additional working group sessions. The concept of dedicating each track to a specific sub-theme was also abandoned as overlapping research interests and presenters' schedules were considered.

Given the large number of modifications to session content and scheduling, the final program was not posted on the conference Web site until mid-January.

3.2.7 Posters

A poster subcommittee composed of six members of the Advisory Committee helped review poster submissions and organize posters into groups. The subcommittee held monthly conference calls to discuss logistics for the poster element of the conference. Subcommittee members also evaluated poster proposals and made recommendations about how posters should be grouped at the conference.

There were 117 poster submissions. In addition, 17 full session proposals were offered poster slots and 168 oral presentation proposals were offered poster slots, totalling 302 poster slots offered. Of those individuals offered poster presentation slots, 229 accepted the offer, and 156 posters were actually presented.

At the conference, posters were mounted in a dedicated poster hall and grouped in the following 12 themes:

1. Ecosystem Management
2. Ecosystem Monitoring, Mapping and Modelling
3. Marine and Freshwater Resources
4. Habitat, Land Use and Species
5. Climate Change Science, Response and Adaptation
6. Habitat Restoration
7. Special Places: The Hood Canal and Elwha River
8. Invasive Species
9. Sediment Issues
10. Eelgrass

11. Citizen Science
12. Salmon

Poster subcommittee members and conference staff also developed a list associating posters with sessions. Each session chair was provided with a copy of the list of relevant posters to announce or post during their session. Posters could be assigned to multiple sessions if applicable. For example, a poster on citizen monitoring of eelgrass beds would appear on the Citizen Science session chair's list as well as the Eelgrass session chair's lists.

As at the 2007 conference, a Poster Gala reception event featuring food and drink served as the central networking event at the conference. Posters were also exhibited during morning breaks, lunch and afternoon breaks.

3.2.8 Concurrent Periods

In the eight concurrent periods (each able to accommodate between five and six individual sessions), there were a total of 43 concurrent sessions. These sessions were either based on accepted full session submissions, modified full session submissions, or groupings of related oral presentations (the minority). While the venue could have accommodated up to eight concurrent sessions, a decision was made early on in the conference planning process to limit concurrent sessions to increase the common conference experience among participants. During the proposal review stage, it was decided that there would be five concurrent sessions, with some additional workshops falling into a sixth track.

In 2007, there were 13 concurrent sessions over the course of four days, which meant that the 2009 conference was already working with a significantly reduced program. This was the main factor in limiting the number of submissions that could be accepted into the conference.

3.2.9 Plenary Sessions

In addition to the 8 concurrent periods, the program featured four plenary sessions in which the entire population of conference participants could be accommodated. The Opening Plenary served as the official opening of the conference with welcoming remarks from the co-chairs and co-hosts, a traditional Coast Salish Welcome, and an opening keynote presentation by Andrew Rosenberg of the University of New Hampshire on ecosystem-based management.

The Health of the Salish Sea plenary session explored the state of the transboundary Puget Sound Georgia Basin ecosystem using the 1994 Marine Science Panel results as a basis for discussion. Panellists shared their perspectives on what has changed since the 1994 Marine Science Panel released its findings and recommendation on the health of the Salish Sea ecosystem and urged conference participants to consider what actions are need to meet the challenges of protecting and restoring the ecological health of the Salish Sea.

Coast Salish Plenary – This plenary session was organized by Debra Lekanof of the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community. In this session, Western Washington Tribes and First Nations shared traditional knowledge, scientific perspectives, tribal research findings and management policy science for the Salish Sea. Panelists presented results and next steps for the Transboundary Tribal Journey Water Quality Gathering Project and discussed priorities for the conference Call to Action.

The Closing Plenary – Scientists, decision makers, and community leaders from the Salish Sea gathered to hear and bear witness to the 2009 Conference Call to Action. Two Coast Salish elders¹ lead the ceremony and invited prominent spokespeople² for the Salish Sea to reflect on the priorities for action that were identified by conference participants and the importance of the Call to Action in protecting and restoring the transboundary ecosystem.³

3.2.10 Themes

As noted above, the 2009 Conference subtitle was “The Future of the Salish Sea: A Call to Action!”. The following table shows the categories of presentations that emerged in the development of the final program.

Name of Sub-Theme/Track	# of sessions in track
A. Clean Air and Climate Change	4
B. Ecosystem Management Strategies and Techniques	9
C. Habitat, Land Use, and Species	13
D. Marine and Freshwater Resources	17

Table 1: Thematic “tracks” in the conference program

3.2.11 Delegate Analysis

Including on-site registrations, 1,179 participants registered during the conference (474 registered for the full conference).

Approximately 88 percent of the participants were from the United States, and 12 percent from Canada. About 53 percent of Canadian participants originated from the GVRD (Metro Vancouver), and about 36 percent came from the Capital Regional District (CRD). Over 50 percent of US participants came from the south central action area, which includes the Seattle-Tacoma metropolitan area.

¹ Larry Campbell, Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, and Ray Harris, Hul’qumi’num Treaty Group

² Witnesses: Ken Brock (Environment Canada), Clinton Charlie (Hul’qumi’num Treaty Group), Joe Gaydos (SeaDoc Society), Chief Lydia Hwitsum (Cowichan Tribes), Michelle Pirzadeh (Environmental Protection Agency Region 10), Bill Ruckelshaus (Puget Sound Partnership)

³ The Call to Action was read by Adam Harding of Pearson College.

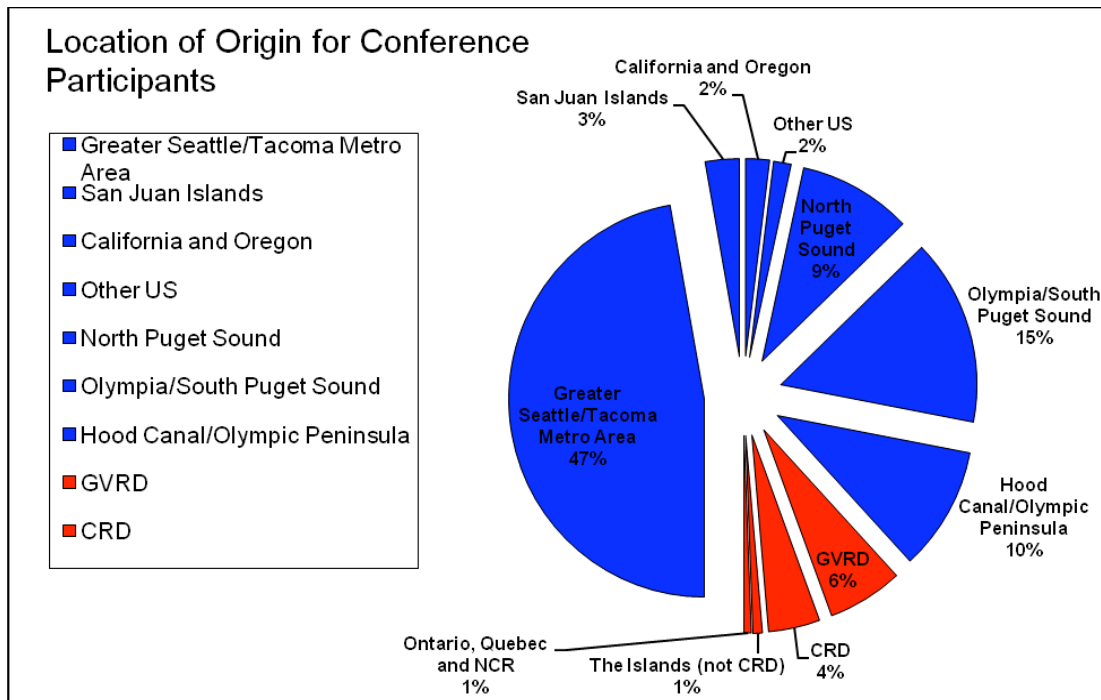


Figure 2: Location of origin for conference delegates

Nearly half of conference participants work for government. Participants span five different sectors – government, academic, non-governmental, private and First nations / Tribal – see Figure 3 and Table 2. There was a lower ratio of Canadian private sector and academic participants as compared to the US, and a higher proportion of Canadian government and First Nations participants as compared to the US.

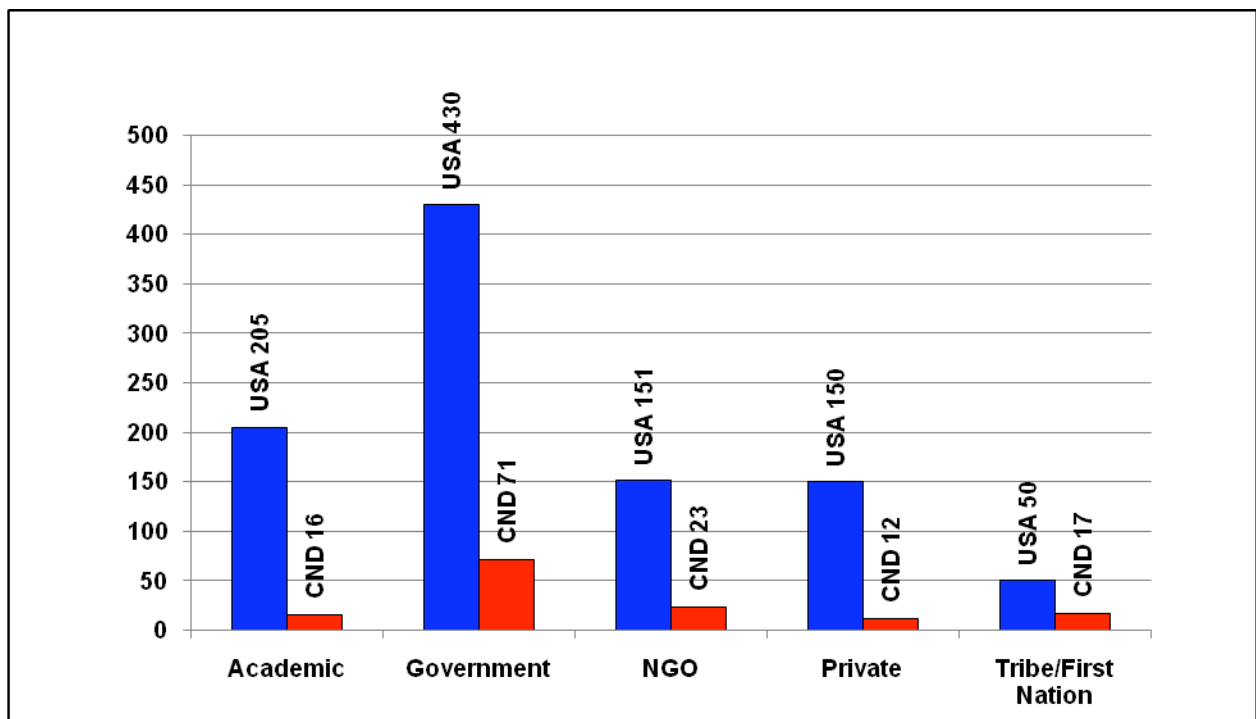


Figure 3: Categories (by nation of origin) of conference delegates

Registration Category	Total Number	Percentage of Category	As Percentage of Total
CND Private Sector	12	9%	
USA Private Sector	150	15%	
<i>Total Private Sector</i>	<i>162</i>		<i>14%</i>
CND Government	71	51%	
USA Government	430	44%	
<i>Total Government</i>	<i>501</i>		<i>45%</i>
CND Academic	16	12%	
USA Academic	205	21%	
<i>Total Academic</i>	<i>221</i>		<i>20%</i>
CND First Nations	17	12%	
USA Tribal	50	5%	
<i>Total FN/Tribal</i>	<i>67</i>		<i>6%</i>
CND NGO	23	17%	
USA NGO	151	15%	
<i>Total NGO</i>	<i>174</i>		<i>15%</i>

Table 2: Location of origin for conference delegates

3.2.12 Presenter Analysis

There were 415 official presenters at the conference (not including plenary speakers, session chairs and informal discussants). Presenters were grouped in two categories:

- Oral Presentations: 259 total
- Poster Presentations: 156 total

The ratio of Canadian to US participants and presenters at the 2009 conference was much lower than at recent conferences (2003, 2005 and 2007), regardless of conference location. At previous conferences, the ratio was about 35/65; at this conference, the ratio was 12/88.

As mentioned in the previous conference report, a key question for consideration is: what explains the higher US representation, regardless of conference location? The conference series has a ten-year history as a Puget Sound-focused event prior to becoming a transboundary event. Other plausible explanations as to why delegates to the conference are more likely to come from the US include the fact that:

- The Puget Sound Partnership has extensive networks within the Puget Sound after completing their Action Agenda; the conference distribution list was heavily skewed towards Puget Sound (approximately 80% of the list was composed of US-based e-mail addresses)
- Canadian travel was restricted due to economic cut-backs; provincial and federal government agencies only permitted a small fraction of those wishing to attend the conference to participate
- Competing conferences, including the Fraser Basin Council's State of the Basin Conference and the State of the Salmon Conference, both took place in Vancouver, one the week following and one the week prior to the PSGB conference

Even greater efforts should be made to target all relevant distribution lists (including those within universities, colleges, non-profits, local and municipal governments) with conference promotion for the next conference.

3.3 Financial

With respect to financial success and attendance, the organizers significantly exceeded their expectations. Initial estimates for the 2009 conference put the total cost of the conference at approximately \$375,000 (USD), equally financed by contributions from registration fees, co-sponsorships and co-host grants. The total number of participants (1,172) vastly exceeded the expected numbers (750-850). By the time of the delivery of the conference, the budget had grown to over \$500,000, largely as a result of increased registration, co-sponsorships that exceeded expectations, increased support from co-hosts and an increase in targeted support (e.g. purchase of delegate bags by Metro Vancouver). Total expenses were on par with the original budget (\$371,885), leaving a significant balance of almost \$140,000.

This is the first year that the conference has had such a significant surplus. Funds will be held in an isolated account through the Puget Sound Partnership and will be used to secure a venue for the 2011 conference, provide scholarships to the 2011 event, and provide a cushion for conference co-hosts to feel more secure in convening the event. The financial report is presented in Appendix 5.

3.4 Other

3.4.1 First Nations / Tribal Engagement

As in previous years, the organizers of the 2009 conference placed particular emphasis on engaging and partnering with Coast Salish Tribes and Nations in the design and delivery of the conference. This effort was greatly enhanced by the existing relationship between Environment Canada and the Environmental Protection Agency, through the Statement of Cooperation Working Group and the Coast Salish Gatherings.

Specific points at which Coast Salish Tribes and Nations directly contributed to the development of the conference were:

- **Advisory Committee:** Several members of the Advisory Committee were members of First Nations / Tribal Communities, employees of these communities, or worked with governments on First Nations engagement.
- **Traditional Coast Salish Welcome and Closing to the Conference:** Debra Lekanof was a particularly strong champion of the conference within the Coast Salish communities. She recruited Chairman Brian Cladoosby of the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, who was particularly instrumental in the conference, welcoming the delegates to the conference. Chairman Brian Cladoosby also provided a lunch address on the first day of the conference and served as a plenary speaker.
- The conference featured a special **First Nations Plenary** on day three of the conference, organized by the Coast Salish with support from the conference organizers. Plenary speakers offered perspectives on the plenary session theme of integration Western and Traditional science.
- A special **First Nations / Tribal concurrent session** was also organized by the Coast Salish and featured presentations by Aboriginal researchers, technicians and managers focused on projects underway in First Nations / Tribal communities throughout the Salish Sea region. Presentations

from Aboriginal researchers were also given throughout the regular concurrent periods of the conference.

- A **Coast Salish Witnessing Closing Plenary** was a true highlight of the conference. Larry Campbell of the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community and Ray Harris of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group lead the witnessing process and invited the reading of the conference Call to Action, as well as introduced the six witnesses⁴, who reflected on the Call to Action from the perspective of their various agencies and acted as recorders of the event in tradition of oral cultures.

3.2 Conference Outreach and Communications

Call to Action – The theme of the 2009 Puget Sound Georgia Basin Ecosystem Conference centered on the idea of a conference Call to Action. The Call to Action was developed by a team of facilitators who worked with session chairs both in advance and during the conference to draw out priorities for action from each session. This group met a minimum of twice daily during the conference (and for a full day prior to the conference) to present the priorities for their respective sessions and decipher patterns within the actions. Senior scientists and decision-makers supported this process. A writer was responsible for summarizing high level findings into a two-page call that could be read in the closing plenary. The Call to Action included recommendations that focused on transboundary issues, opportunities for collaboration, and commitment to action for the protection and restoration of the shared ecosystem. (See conference website www.psgbconference.org for the Call to Action)

The services of a graphic facilitator were retained throughout the conference, on the recommendation of several people who had witnessed his work at the Coast Salish Gathering. He prepared large murals that visually captured the content and energy of plenary sessions and a number of breakout sessions. These murals, available on the conference Web site, were received extremely well by conference participants.

3.3 Off-Program Events

A series of “off-program elements” – events related to the conference themes and purpose, but held either off-site or convened as a complement to the formal conference program – were organized for the benefit of conference delegates. The emphasis and effort to coordinate these evening and daytime events was greater than in previous years. The following outlines the primary events featured at the 2009 conference.

- **Seattle Aquarium Reception** – The conference launched Sunday evening with an event featuring reflections from engaging speakers on the value of protecting and restoring the Puget Sound Georgia Basin marine ecosystem. Speakers included Billy Frank, Jr., Chairman, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission; Jennifer Lash, Executive Director, Living Oceans Society; David Dicks, Executive Director, Puget Sound Partnership. The event concluded with a Presentation of the SeaDoc Society Salish Sea Science Prize for work that has resulted in the marked improvement of management or policy related to the conservation of marine wildlife and the Salish Sea marine ecosystem. Approximately 200 people attended this inspiring conference kick-off, which featured a video produced by the Puget Sound Partnership on the importance of protecting the Puget Sound

ecosystem, a delicious buffet of locally inspired foods, and an opportunity to network and get acquainted with other conference participants.

- **Poster Gala:** The highlight of the conference, this event shone a spotlight on the inspiring, informative and groundbreaking research examining the state of the Salish Sea and opportunities for restoring and protecting it. The Gala featured 156 poster presenters, 20 student presenters, and provided an unparalleled networking opportunity for scientists, policy makers, non-profit organizations, and others focused on the Puget Sound Georgia Basin ecosystem.
- **Artists' Reception:** This event, held at the Hyatt at Olive 8, showcased scenes by amateur artists and professional photographers capturing the Salish Sea, and reproductions of posters by student artists (grades 3-7) depicting what the ocean means to them.
- **Environmental Film Festival:** Held at the Hyatt at Olive 8 following the Artists' Reception, the second annual Puget Sound Georgia Basin Ecosystem Conference Environmental Film Festival featured a public screening of short films from Canada and the United States illustrating some of the challenges and inspiring stories about this unique ecosystem. About 150 people attended this exciting event. Films included the following:
 - ***Three Poems on Water*** (recut 2008)
Director/Producer: Dan Kowalski, Rollingbay Works
 - ***School in the Woods*** (2007)
Director: Michael Gross, Glass Jaw Productions
Producer: Katie Jennings, IslandWood
 - ***Living on the Edge*** (2008)
Director/Producer: Heather Danskin, Katie Kassof, Scott Kuttler, Erik Subrizi, Students at American University
 - ***Forecasting Harmful Algae Blooms*** (2007)
Director: Lauren Kuehne, NW Fisheries Science Center
Producer: Dr. Vera L. Trainer, NW Fisheries Science Center
 - ***Net Loss*** (2007)
Director/Producer: Mark Dworkin and Melissa Young
MOVING IMAGES (excerpt)
 - ***Belonging*** (2008)
Director/Producer: Gerard Ungerman & Audrey Brohy (excerpt)
 - ***Intertwined: People, Salmon, and Place*** (recut 2008)
Director/Producer: Dan Kowalski, Rollingbay Works
 - ***Red Gold*** (2008)
Director: Ben Knight and Travis Rummel, Felt Soul Media
Producer: Travis Rummel and Laura Oakes (excerpt)
 - ***Indigenous Plant Diva*** (2008)
Director: Kamala Todd
Producer Selwyn Jacob, National Film Board (Canada)
 - ***March Point*** (2008)
Directors: —Tracy Rector and Annie Silverstein
Producer: Longhouse Media and Native Lens
- **Field Trips:** Four site tours were offered on Sunday, February 8, preceding the conference. The following projects were highlighted on the trips:

- **New Wastewater Technology Tour** – Sixteen conference participants saw firsthand the 2008 Water Reuse Association's Small Project of the Year. Carnation's Wastewater Treatment Plant, located 27 miles east of Seattle, came online in 2008. The facility uses an advanced technology (membrane bioreactor) to treat up to 400,000 gallons of the city's wastewater per day to Class A reclaimed water standards. Reclaimed water is used to enhance a nearby wetland at Chinook Bend Natural Area. King County staff showed off Carnation's wetland and treatment facility and concluded with a presentation on the new King County Brightwater Plant, which will use the same technology on a much larger scale. The Brightwater Plant is planned for completion in 2010 (operational in 2011).
- **Nisqually Estuary Restoration Tour** – Puget Sound's largest estuary restoration project, scheduled for completion in 2010, is restoring over 900 acres of estuarine habitat, increasing the amount of salt marsh habitat in Southern Puget Sound by 55 percent and reopening 21 miles of tidal channels. Thirty-nine people participated in this tour visiting 140 acres of Nisqually Tribal land reopened to tidal influence by two different dike removals in 2004 and 2006. Participants traveled across the Nisqually River to observe construction underway to restore another 762 acres at the Nisqually Wildlife Refuge.
- **Urban Innovative Projects Tour** – Low impact development (green infrastructure) and habitat projects can benefit aquatic ecosystems in the urban environment. Twenty-five people visited multiple sites in Seattle, including Seattle Street Edge Alternatives ("SEA Streets"), a natural stormwater drainage system in the Broadview neighborhood, coastal restoration along Puget Sound shoreline, test habitat panels for the Seattle Seawall, and "Swale on Yale", the nation's first urban large-scale bio-filtration swale.
- **King County "Walk the Line" Tour** – The 1990 Growth Management Act established a land use planning framework for counties and cities in Washington. Under the Act, counties designate Urban Growth Areas, within which the county or city zones for urban densities, and outside of which the county maintains rural character and farm and forest lands. Fifteen tour participants walked the urban growth boundary line to observe firsthand the impacts of the Act on impervious surface, stormwater, and flood mitigation, and better understand the impacts of growth patterns on watershed and Salish Sea health. The tour focused on the Snoqualmie River valley in eastern King County exploring, comparing and contrasting projects and communities including Issaquah Highlands, a Built Green certified urban village, and the town and farms of Carnation.

4.0 Impact and Recommendations for 2011

Judging from the reactions of participants on-site during the conference, the delivery of the conference exceeded the expectations of many delegates. Delegates consistently remarked on the energy in the hallways, the quality of the presentations and discussion, and the value inherent in being able to interact with colleagues and co-delegates from diverse fields on both sides of the Canada/United States border.

4.1 Overall Recommendations for 2011 Based on Evaluation Responses

The conference organizers distributed a paper copy of an evaluation form to all participants, as well as circulating an online survey link to all participants following the conference. This two-tiered approach to collecting completed evaluations was also supported by three prizes (weekend for two at Hyatt at Olive 8 in Seattle, weekend for two at Westin Bayshore in Vancouver, and four aquarium passes, all donated by the respective organizations) donated by sponsors for those who completed the evaluations and included their names.

The result of the survey is a summary of findings that provides a rich set of data for organizers to consider in future iterations of the conference, as well as responses which alternatively confirm, dispel and challenge long-held beliefs about the conference and its stakeholders.

Of the 1,179 delegates to the conference, approximately 300 (25.8%, an increase of almost 10% from the 2007 conference) completed either the paper or online version of the evaluation. Evaluated by category of respondent, responses from government and academic delegates were higher than their proportions as registrants; responses from NGOs and First Nations / Tribal were lower.

This section summarizes some of the key recommendations emerging from both the conference evaluation and from the conference Advisory Committee and core planning team. The full evaluation report is available in Appendix 6.

Overall:

- ✓ Develop a success-oriented theme for 2011 that emphasizes positive lessons and progress in achieving some of the 2009 Call to Action priorities.
- ✓ Consider how to balance the importance of science and the effective sharing of science with the needs to make science relevant for policy and management (see ideas under Program).
- ✓ Consider avoiding the legislative session in Washington State to draw more politicians to the conference from both sides of the border.
- ✓ Offer more subsidies and scholarships to expand participation from all sectors.
- ✓ Increase Canadian participation in all sectors.
- ✓ Graphic facilitation is extremely popular and should be considered for 2011.

Planning:

- ✓ Allow minimum of 14 months for planning conference (see 4.2 below).
- ✓ Create core Advisory Committee of 12-14 people (approximately one Canadian and one American from each of federal, provincial, regional and local government, Coast Salish Tribes and Nations, non-profit, academic, and co-hosts), with expanded group for visioning, review, and implementation, as necessary.
- ✓ Clearly set meeting dates and expectations for the year leading up to the conference.
- ✓ Circulate the call for full proposals three months prior to the call for papers to ensure that all topical areas are covered and that submitted papers fill necessary gaps.
- ✓ Simplify the proposal submission process.
- ✓ Coach session chairs to ensure quality presentations in each session.

Finances:

- ✓ Allow more registration payment options and simplify cheque payment system.

- ✓ Meet with financially responsible organization at start of planning process for clarity on all purchasing restrictions and timelines.
- ✓ Consider using contracted conference managers to manage all finances.
- ✓ Allow comps to register through registration page to simplify tracking.
- ✓ One person to be deemed responsible for updating budget and tracking all sponsorships.
- ✓ Focus on sponsorship earlier in planning process and consider retaining services of professional fundraiser.
- ✓ Consider broader advertising of conference to exhibitors.

Website:

- ✓ All text should be pre-approved before sending for Web site upload.
- ✓ One point person for all final Web site updates.
- ✓ Allow two weeks for Web site upload.
- ✓ Avoid using exact dates on any Web site materials (e.g. use “late May” rather than May 21st).

Program:

- ✓ Ensure that the full conference program is available 2-3 months prior to the conference.
- ✓ Allow for 3.5 days of conference sessions (rather than three) to make best use of available time for sessions.
- ✓ Reduce the number of plenary sessions to three overall (i.e. no more than one per day).
- ✓ Expand topics to include key underrepresented areas (e.g. migratory birds, air quality, environmental justice).
- ✓ Consider holding a high-level policy plenary in opening where decision-makers call scientists to provide them with the information they need (specifics) to move forward; this could fuel the specific content in the Call to Action.
- ✓ Consider alternating science sessions with policy/management sessions; one strong option would be to have a science session followed by a policy/management session on the same topic that builds off the first.
- ✓ Consider allowing two session formats – one to follow a 5 x 15 minute format that allows people to move between sessions and one called workshop/panel that permits more open, fluid use of time based on session chair needs.
- ✓ Allow for two formal poster viewings (consider holding one evening and one lunch buffet for circulating in poster hall).
- ✓ Allow speakers to present only once in conference program.
- ✓ Avoid use of plenary room for sessions, as space is cavernous in discussion-based sessions, or find way to move participants to front of room.

Call to Action:

- ✓ Ensure consistency in collection of Call to Action items within each session.
- ✓ Work with session chairs in advance to ensure priorities are clearly identified.
- ✓ Call to Action should include specific examples of actions.
- ✓ Call to Action concept very good, process and output could use refinement.
- ✓ Process for Call to Action follow-up with media and stakeholders could be strengthened.

Media:

- ✓ Increase media presence at conference and ensure media follow-up with press releases.
- ✓ Ensure most popular sessions will have largest rooms.
- ✓ Avoid lunch speakers to encourage networking.
- ✓ Make meeting rooms available (by advance application) during the conference to working groups and agencies.

Catering:

- ✓ Provide healthy morning snacks and simplify lunches.
- ✓ Clearly indicate in program and on tables where coffee stations can be found during breaks (particularly when service is placed in two areas).
- ✓ Provision of alcohol should be provided directly through a sponsor.

Conference Handouts:

- ✓ Print 20% more programs than expected number of participants, recognizing that more people may show up than expected and that people who lose their programs will want a second copy.
- ✓ Flash drives were appreciated, but there was concern over the use of magnets in the cap.
- ✓ Bags were not overly popular, particularly given the small number of handouts.
- ✓ Gifts were well-regarded, particularly the carved wooden paddles.

Events:

- ✓ Tour organizers should be main points of contact for all questions regarding tours prior to the conference.
- ✓ Allow guests to pay to attend event.
- ✓ Consider holding tours on afternoon of second day of conference for a break from regular sessions, to encourage networking, and to get people out into region.

4.2 Challenges and Lessons Learned in Planning and Implementation

Although the structural changes to the Puget Sound Georgia Basin Ecosystem Conference resulted in a successful event, the conference planning team experienced several challenges along the way. Overall, the effort made to steer the conference toward the most timely and least understood topics was partially successful, and the effort to focus jointly on science and management in all sessions was largely successful.

The following outlines some of the greatest challenges and lessons learned, and recommendations for consideration when planning the 2011 conference.

- Planning Timeline – although the 2009 conference was about 25 percent larger than the 2007 conference and proposals received more than doubled, the conference planning team had four fewer months to plan the event. The shortened timeline and increased number of proposals resulted in planning difficulties.
Recommendations for 2011 conference:
 - Lengthen the overall conference planning timeline from 8 months to 14 months.
 - Increase up-front time for Co-Chairs and conference staff to establish a clear planning process, schedule, management and tracking system, roles, goals, etc.

- Develop the Call for Proposals sooner to allow sufficient time to post the conference schedule on the Web site in advance, and provide session chairs sufficient time to coordinate with presenters.
 - Allow for a longer proposal review period, including more time between the submission deadline and review meeting(s), and more time to process feedback from the Advisory Committee prior to notifying applicants of their status.
 - Simplify the review process following an accept/decline model that minimizes complexities in program development
- Communication and Coordination – although the conference planning team worked well together, several challenges impeded the communication process and decreased the team's efficiency.
 - Multiple locations – trans-boundary coordination between co-sponsoring agencies has always been a challenge, but conference planning team members for the 2009 conference found themselves in five different locations throughout much of the planning process.
 - Multiple commitments and limited time – several involved on the conference planning team were either part-time staff, or were assigned to multiple projects during the conference planning process. This resulted in slower response times among team members and decreased efficiency.

Recommendations for 2011 conference:

- Dedicate sufficient staff time for conference planning. As noted in the 2007 final conference report, "The planning process involved a half-time commitment from each Conference Chair during the period June – November, and a full-time commitment from December through to the conference." Based on this, ensure that both conference co-chairs are completely dedicated to the conference in the months leading up to the conference and that supporting staff are fully available, as required.
 - Consolidate conference planning staff in fewer locations, or plan for a sufficient number of conference calls and in-person meetings to ensure a coordinated and consistent planning process, and reinforce team solidarity.
- Online Review Process – the START conference management system, an online system used to manage proposal submissions and review, was new to all involved in planning and participating in the 2009 PSGB Conference. Challenges associated with the new system were as follows:
 - START should have been implemented early. The START system was a good idea, but it was implemented late in the planning process.
 - The UW Conference team was familiar with the START system. However, it had not yet been used for conference planning, therefore potential limitations and issues had not been adequately identified and resolved.
 - There was insufficient training for conference staff, Co-Chairs and Advisory Committee members on use of the START system. Due to lack of training, the conference planning team did not know how to navigate the system efficiently or understand how to use available tools to better manage conference related information. Although the UW Conference team provided general guidance via phone and e-mail, an in-person training session would have been helpful.

- Applicants experienced difficulties using the online system to submit proposals. There was a heavy load of questions, several people had a hard time following directions provided, and many applicants left out essential information, including presenter details and contact information.
- Advisory Committee members had difficulty navigating the system to evaluate proposals and provide feedback.
- The START system was not sufficiently used to track modifications to session/presentation content including status, updated/revised abstracts, presenters, etc. Many people who did not understand the system did not use it to track changes. Instead, modifications were tracked in a decentralized manner, decreasing efficiency and increasing the potential for mistakes.

Recommendations for 2011 conference:

- Establish a centralized, customizable online database for tracking information. The conference planning team needs a centralized way to manage information, whether it is START or another similar system, to ensure good organization, efficiency and accuracy.
 - Ensure that there is an expert on the conference team who is able to troubleshoot the database system and answer users' questions.
 - Develop guidelines for the online system for each user class (e.g. Co-Chairs, conference staff, Advisory Committee members, and applicants) and ensure that these guidelines are adhered to without exception by all users.
 - Provide in-person or guided online trainings for frequent users (i.e. Co-Chairs, conference staff, and Advisory Committee members) to ensure that they are able to use the system as intended and adhere to usage guidelines.
- Poster Sessions – although conference organizers worked hard to make the poster hall accessible and dedicate time to poster viewing, there were several remarks that not enough attention was given to organizing posters within the poster hall and announcing them within sessions.
 - Announcement of related posters during sessions – although session chairs received information on associated posters, it was sent out shortly before the conference, and not always shared during sessions.
 - Poster hall organization and signage – many conference participants noted that poster “pods” signage could be improved, posters could be better labelled and organized in a more logical way, and that it could be easier to locate posters based on their listings in the program.

Recommendations for 2011 conference:

- Improve integration of posters with general sessions. The poster gala has become a successful highlight of the conference; however, posters could be better linked with oral sessions by improving communication between session chairs and poster presenters.
- Move up the poster accept/decline deadline, and build more time into the conference schedule for developing poster/session linkages and poster pod assignments. Most organization, communication and signage issues can be resolved in 2011 by ensuring that deadlines are honoured and adequate planning time is allowed.

5.0 Conclusions

The Puget Sound Georgia Basin Ecosystem Conference is extremely valuable as a locus of information sharing, partnership development, cross-border dialogue, and communication across sectors. Both Environment Canada and the Puget Sound Partnership are committed to seeing the event continue, as it develops into a strong model for sharing science, informing policy, and establishing productive relationships.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Proposed planning schedule for 2011 Puget Sound Georgia Basin Ecosystem Conference

Appendix 2: Conference Summary of the 2003 Georgia Basin Puget Sound Research Conference

Appendix 3: Proceedings of the 2005 Puget Sound Georgia Basin Research Conference

Appendix 4: Planning the 2007 Puget Sound Georgia Basin Research Conference

Appendix 5: Draft budget for the 2009 Puget Sound Georgia Basin Ecosystem Conference

Appendix 6: Evaluation Report for 2009 Puget Sound Georgia Basin Ecosystem Conference

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE MATERIALS: (available through Environment Canada)

Notes from Final Advisory Committee Debrief (April 3, 2009)

Notes from targeted Call to Action Interviews by Keith Jardine (February 28, 2009)

Report drafted April 9, 2009, by Bronwen Geddes (Environment Canada) and Rachel Patterson (EnviroIssues)

Appendix 1:**Proposed planning schedule for 2011 Puget Sound Georgia Basin Ecosystem Conference**

Weeks/Months From Conference	<i>Outcome/Goal</i>
18-24 months	Secure date, venue, and hotel rooms
15 months	Identify Conference Co-Chairs
14 months	Identify and recruit Advisory Committee (AC) members and notify members of all meeting dates and locations leading up to the conference
13 months	AC meetings #1: Identify conference theme, determine conference objectives, clarify Advisory Committee roles and responsibilities
12-13 months	Develop conference logo and look and feel Establish conference Web site with basic conference information
12 months	AC meeting #2: Review conference components, clarify desired content and approach for Call for Proposals and Call for Papers
11 months	Develop Call for Full Session proposals
10 months	Circulate "Save the Date" E-Mail/Postcard Conference Web site up and running Release Call for Full Session proposals Establish budget and begin fundraising
9 months	Full Session proposals due
8 months	AC meeting #3: select Full Session topics
7 months	Notify Full Session proposal authors Full Session selection process complete Develop Call for Oral Presentations and Posters
6 months	Release Call for Oral Presentations and Posters
5 months	Oral Presentation and Poster proposals due
4-5 months	AC meeting #4: sort individual Oral Presentation proposals and draft program
3-4 months	Notify Oral Presentation and Poster proposal authors Complete draft conference program
3 months	AC meeting #5: discuss final program, determine session chair assignments, categorize posters Confirm catering, A/V
2-3 months	Develop communications plan

1-2 months <i>after</i>	AC meeting #6: debrief conference final report and evaluation results
3 months <i>after</i>	Finalize evaluation and final conference reports
6 months <i>after</i>	Proceedings complete

Appendix 2:

Conference Summary of the 2003 Georgia Basin / Puget Sound Research Conference⁵

The Context

The Georgia Basin/Puget Sound region is one of the most diverse regions of North America—diverse in its ecology, its landscape, and its peoples. This region is also a place where common concerns and responses must transcend jurisdictional boundaries and cross disciplines to secure regional sustainability.

Nearly 7 million people are in the region now; that number is expected to increase to more than 9 million by 2020. As a result of past rapid growth, and in the face of continued growth, cultural icons such as wild Pacific salmon and resident killer whales are and will be increasingly threatened, as will other important natural resources and local ecosystems.

The 2003 Georgia Basin/Puget Sound Research Conference has demonstrated that although much has been done to stem toxic pollution, contain urban growth, and protect and restore ecosystems in this outstanding region, many environmental health and ecosystem function issues remain, and emerging ones are being recognized. More needs to be done to minimize the ongoing degradation and loss and to protect, recover, and restore the natural qualities of this regional ecosystem if we are to secure its sustainable future.

The Challenge

Our region has undergone change and will continue to experience change. Our challenge is to understand the change and its impact on the overall health of the ecosystem and to develop measures to adapt to or manage the change.

Securing a sustainable region from **environmental perspectives** means:

- Minimizing or stopping ongoing damage, degradation, and loss.
- Protecting at-risk landscapes and sensitive ecosystems.
- Restoring degraded environmental and ecosystem conditions.
- Securing a sustainable region from **social and economic perspectives** means:
- Generating, reporting, and using science-based, traditional, and local environmental knowledge in decision-making.
- Understanding, informing, and engaging people (through their governments, their for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, and as individuals) in a dialogue about the importance of environmental, ecosystem, and species health to the region's social and economic well-being.
- Promoting and supporting the effective use of decision support tools and procedures aimed at triple bottom-line policy, planning, and implementation strategies—**those that**

⁵ *Conference Summary: Challenge and Directions Statement: Securing a Sustainable Region*. April, 2004. Authors: Erik Karlsen; Joseph K. Gaydos; Pete Dowty; David Fraser; Ann Lesperance; Bruce Kay; Michael Rylko; Peter Ronald.

David Fraser, co-chair for the 2003 and 2005 research conferences, co-authored an article in *Environmental Monitoring and Assessment* entitled "Collaborative Science, Policy Development and Program Implementation in the Transboundary Georgia Basin/Puget Sound Ecosystem". The article discusses the Georgia Basin Puget Sound transboundary ecosystem and how the 2003 GB/PS Research Conference opened the doors for large-scale informal cross-boarder cooperation and management. The article can be viewed at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10661-005-9096-2>

integrate social, economic, and environmental considerations to deliver sustainable results.

The Conference

An international and multidisciplinary group of more than 800 scientists, planners, administrators, and others representing all orders of government, nongovernmental organizations, learning and research institutions, and communities gathered at the Westin Bayshore in Vancouver, British Columbia, on March 31 through April 3, 2003, to define and respond to the challenges facing the environmental health and ecological sustainability of the Georgia Basin/ Puget Sound region.

Canada's Minister of Environment, the Governor of Washington State, British Columbia's Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection, and First Nations/Tribal leaders gave their strong commitments to a shared approach to addressing the environmental and ecosystem concerns in this region.

Leading global experts advocated a place-based approach—an approach that involves building a strong community awareness of the qualities of this region, forging a strong identity with this place, and taking responsibility for its sustainability by ensuring the protection of human health, communities, natural resources, and supporting ecosystems.

Three hundred presentations were made. These included unprecedented and highly welcome presentations from Coast Salish delegates. Hearing about how Coast Salish peoples lived in balance with the resources in this region for thousands of years provided valuable insights about the principles and practices needed today to secure the region's future. In addition, students from the region's universities and colleges made presentations giving assurance that future research, policy advice, and action will receive ongoing commitment from established and new researchers and advisors.

Future Directions

The conference called for:

1. Continued basic scientific research, more integrated and applied scientific research, and the use of traditional and local knowledge to improve understanding about the complex environmental, biological, chemical, cultural, social, and economic dynamics in the region.
2. Public education about these dynamics and the role individuals can take to protect and restore healthy environmental and ecological conditions.
3. Continued development and increasing application of decision support tools to help governments, the private sector, and individuals take the actions necessary to secure a sustainable region.

Decisions made today are tomorrow's legacy. By building on a solid record of years of cooperation and coordination among disciplines and across jurisdictions, these steps will lead to improvements to marine, freshwater, and terrestrial ecosystems and will contribute to ensuring and enhancing our economic and social well-being.

More research is needed on:

- Climate change, impacts and adaptation responses.

- Technologies for improving air quality, minimizing stormwater and hydrological impacts, understanding pathways and remediating toxins in the system, and preventing and controlling invasive species.
- Basic biology, ecology, and stressors of threatened and endangered species.
- Ecosystem-level tools for conservation, such as marine protected areas, terrestrial wildlife corridors, and watershed protection plans.
- Understanding the long-term threats to health-environment-energy-economic linkages.

Appendix 3:

Proceedings of the 2005 Puget Sound Georgia Basin Research Conference⁶

Introduction

August 2005

The Puget Sound Action Team (Action Team) and the Georgia Basin Action Plan (GBAP) partners are pleased to provide you with the Proceedings of the 2005 Puget Sound Georgia Basin Research Conference.

On March 29-31, 850 scientists, First Nations and Tribal government representatives, resource managers, community leaders, policy makers, educators and students convened at the Washington State Convention and Trade Center in Seattle, Washington, U.S.A. to share science and information about the condition and management of the shared Puget Sound Georgia Basin ecosystem.

The 2005 Puget Sound Georgia Basin Research Conference titled "Science for the Salish Sea: A Sense of Place, A Sense of Change" is the region's largest and most visible effort to communicate research on the condition of the Puget Sound Georgia Basin, and the premier opportunity for participants to share successes and challenges in the restoration and protection of the Puget Sound Georgia Basin region. Conference themes included:

- (1) Science to define and understand the shared Puget Sound Georgia Basin transboundary region - its structure, function, traditional and societal characteristics; and,
- (2) Using science and traditional knowledge to address the changes facing the transboundary Puget Sound Georgia Basin ecosystem.

The conference program included approximately 300 technical papers, 100 posters, a Poster Gala featuring Pearl Django, a local Seattle gypsy-swing band, panel presentations, workshops and keynote speakers and an evening public session where local politicians and scientists discussed linkages between science and policy implementation.

The conference co-chairs thank the Action Team and GBAP Staff, in particular TC Christian, Gigi Williams, Sande Petkau, Stephanie Sylvestre, Jennifer Alderson and Adam Keizer for their tireless assistance with conference planning. A warm thank-you as well to Dr. Jan Newton (UW Applied Physics Laboratory), Ann Lesperance (Pacific Northwest National Laboratory), and Peter Ronald (Georgia Strait Alliance). We appreciate the talents of Jan Kvamme and Debra Bryant (Engineering Professional Programs at the University of Washington) for their exceptional conference planning efforts. Finally, a special thanks goes to the Conference Advisory Committee and the many generous co-sponsors on both sides of the border.

About the files

The proceedings papers, abstracts, transcripts of keynote addresses, session summaries and author biographies are in Portable Document Format (PDF).

How to find a paper

You may access proceedings' papers in two ways:

⁶ Full proceedings document available at
<http://www.engr.washington.edu/epp/psgb/2005psgb/2005proceedings/index.html>

- Session name: "Oral Presentations" or "Poster Presentations" from the left sidebar menu. Links to papers and abstracts are organized by session.
- Author name: "Author Biographies" from the left sidebar menu.

The editorial/publication process

A peer review process is not a part of the material collected in these proceedings. The graphics and references in these papers appear as they were originally submitted by the authors. If you have difficulty viewing the graphics, please contact the author for a higher quality graphic. If a manuscript or extended abstract was not submitted for publication in the Proceedings, a short abstract is included. Author contact information and web links were current at the time presenters provided their information. Please contact the author if you have difficulty linking to a web resource. We encourage you to contact the authors/presenters for further information and updates on any of the material presented in the proceedings.

2005 PSGB Research Conference Proceedings CD

Copies of the 2005 PSGB Research Conference Proceedings may be purchased for \$15 from the Puget Sound Action Team. Please contact Gigi Williams (gwilliams@psat.wa.gov; 360-725-5454) to order a CD.

Further information

If you are interested in further information on the shared Georgia Basin-Puget Sound ecosystem we encourage you to visit the conference hosts via their web sites:

Puget Sound Action Team: <http://www.psat.wa.gov/>

Georgia Basin Action Plan: www.pyr.ec.gc.ca/georgiabasin/

Proceedings updates and links to past Research Conference Proceedings are available from the Puget Sound Action Team Web site.

Appendix 4:

Planning the 2007 Puget Sound Georgia Basin Research Conference

Planning began in early 2006 under the joint direction of the Georgia Basin Action Plan (Environment Canada, GBAP Manager Mary Beth Bérubé as interim Canadian Chair) and the Puget Sound Action Team (State of Washington, PSAT Science Liaison Sarah Brace as US Chair). The Canadian Chair (Justin Longo) was appointed in June 2006, and the Advisory Committee was identified at the same time.

Planning for the conference continued under the joint direction of the US and Canadian Chairs.

The planning process involved a half-time commitment from each Conference Chair during the period June – November, and a full-time commitment from December through to the conference.

The general objectives for 2007 were to meet the expectations of organizers in terms of financial success and attendance, and exceed the expectations of delegates and presenters in terms of programming and content. Both sets of objectives were framed with reference to previous PSGB research conferences.

Conference planning falls under two headings: program development and logistics:

1. Program Development

The first meeting of the conference advisory committee in June 2006 focussed on the development of conference themes, general program framework and structure and discussion of potential keynote speakers.

A draft “Call for Abstracts” emerged from this meeting and was distributed in September to previous conference attendees and presenters and to wider distribution lists. By the abstract submission deadline of November 1, approximately 500 proposed abstracts were received by the conference secretariat.

All proposals were then sorted into preliminary sessions and poster groupings at a sub-committee meeting on November 7. Given the number of abstracts received and the groupings that emerged, a draft program was developed and presented to a subsequent meeting of the Advisory Committee on November 20. At that meeting, the committee confirmed that all abstracts would be accepted; that individual sessions would be limited to 1.5 hours and up-to six presentations per session would be accommodated.

From there, the conference co-chairs worked iteratively to develop a program structure, placing abstracts in session organizing sessions across thirteen concurrent periods during the four days of the conference. Also, subject to input from the Advisory Committee, three plenary sessions were organized within the program.

Presenters were contacted by the conference secretariat in early January 2007 with a confirmation of their presentation and the session in which they had been scheduled. This process led to a further round of program refinement.

Lastly, session chairs were recruited to act as moderator for the individual sessions. Again, further iterative program development ensued between the two conference chairs. This process was facilitated by the use of a spreadsheet that linked submitted abstracts to a draft program structure (see \\Pyrvanfp\gbei\Workshops and Meetings\GB PS Research Conference\2007\?\Draft Program 09-MAR-2007.xls).

In order to accommodate up-to six sessions in each concurrent period, the program development process needed to link to logistic process in order to arrange for break-out rooms at the conference facility. This also needed to coordinate with the use of the plenary rooms for plenary sessions, and the lunch and networking breaks throughout the program.

The development of the plenary sessions – opening, closing and the special First Nations / Tribal session – required additional organizational efforts. The conference chairs worked in concert with the keynote speaker, host organizations, First Nations and Tribal partners, and other partners to plan the structure and flow of these sessions.

2. Logistics

Responsibility for the logistical organization of the conference, especially with respect to management of the abstract submission and acceptance process, registrations and delegate support, and arrangements with the conference facility, rested with the conference secretariat.

The Engineering Professional Program (EPP) at the University of Washington uses an abstract submission process to translate web-submitted abstracts into a spreadsheet format. This process also manages the process of communicating by email with proponents as to acceptance and scheduling.

Registration was also handled through the EPP system, through to the on-site handling of delegate check-in and late registration.

Given their experience with conference logistics, the conference secretariat handled arrangements with the conference venue with respect to guest rooms, plenary and concurrent session rooms, catering and dining, audio-visual support and show services.

Appendix 5:

Draft Budget for 2009 Puget Sound Georgia Basin Ecosystem Conference (April 8, 2009)

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

UW Conference Management

Conference Title: **2009 PSGB Research Conference**
 Course Code #: **1PSG091**
 Dates: **February 8-11, 2009**

Conference Chair:
 Organization:
 Conference Location: **WSCTC**
 Conference Manager: **Jan/Debra/Syd**
 Date of last revision: **4/8/2009**

100	REVENUE						
	Registration Fees		# Persons	Reg. Fee		Subtotal	TOTAL
110	Full Conference Registration	category:	362	400.00		144,800.00	
115	One Day Registration	category:	72	200.00		14,400.00	
120	Reduced Rate	category:	187	200.00		37,400.00	
125	Reduced Rate One Day	category:	32	100.00		3,200.00	
130	Late Full Conference Reg	category:	112	450.00		50,400.00	
135	Late One Day Registration	category:	89	225.00		20,025.00	
140	Late Reduced Rate Reg	category:	73	225.00		16,425.00	
145	Late One Day Reduced Rate	category:	26	125.00		3,250.00	
150	Speaker	category:	3	-		-	
155	Volunteer/Scholarship/Journ	category:	41	-		-	
160	Sponsor trade for passes	category:	10	400.00		4,000.00	
	Sponsor trade for passes	category:	7	200.00		1,400.00	
165	Press	category:	8	-		-	
170	Sponsor Comps promised	category:	66	-		-	
175	Other Comps	category:	54	-		-	
185	Monday Only-No Lunch (not	category:	27	50.00		1,350.00	
185	Sunday Tours Only	category:	10	-		-	
190			1,179				
180	Sunday Tours	category:	78	25.00		1,950.00	
						Registration fee revenue	\$ 298,600.00
200	Dept of Natural Resources (10 passes)		-	-		1,000.00	
	American Fisheries Society (7 passes)					1,000.00	
205	WA Oil Spill \$1000 VISA to UW		-	-		880.00	
210	ESA Adolfson					1,000.00	
215	Seattle City Light					1,000.00	
220	Seattle Aquarium		-			1,000.00	
225	Seattle Aquarium - trade for space		-	2,500.00			
	EnviroIssues			2,500.00			
245	City of Seattle/Public Utilities					2,500.00	
250	Fugro Seafloor Surveys					2,500.00	
255	Hart Crowser					2,500.00	
260	HDR					2,500.00	
265	The SeaDoc Society					2,500.00	
270	WSDOT					2,500.00	
275	US Fish and Wildlife					5,000.00	
280	WA Dept of Ecology					5,000.00	
290	Washington Sea Grant					5,000.00	
295	WSU Extension Beachwatchers					5,000.00	
300	EPA - Not Paid Yet					25,000.00	
305	Commitment by U.S./PSP					50,000.00	
310	Capital Regional District			1,000.00		800.00	
	Northwest Straights			1,000.00		800.00	
315	Offsetters - Trade in kind					2,500.00	
	Jones & Jones - Trade in Kind			2,500.00			
320	Parametrics - ????			2,500.00			
325	Fisheries and Oceans Canada			5,000.00		4,000.00	
330	Metro Vancouver - Trade in Kind					5,000.00	
335	Parks Canada			10,000.00		8,000.00	
340	Environment Canada for Facilitator					12,000.00	
345	Environment Canada			40,000.00		32,000.00	
350	Commitment by Canada			50,000.00		40,000.00	
						sponsorship revenue	\$ 220,980.00
400						\$ -	
410	Carry forward from 2007					7,800.00	\$ 7,800.00
500	GROSS REVENUE						\$ 527,380.00
640	RegOnLine Setup Fee					(150.00)	
	RegOnLine 3.95% of on-line revenue					(10,364.60)	
	RegOnLine \$3.50 per registrant					(3,136.00)	
							\$ (13,650.60)
700	NET REVENUE						\$513,729.40

	DESCRIPTION					TOTAL
	EXPENSES					
1000	Promotion	Quantity	Unit Cost			
1010	Call for Papers					
1020	Design/Printing	-	-		-	
1030	Labels / Mailing Lists	-	-		-	
1040	U.S. Postage	-	-		-	
1050	Non-U.S. Postage	-	-		-	
1060	Mailing Services	-	-		-	
1070	Postcard or Circular	-	-		-	
1080	Sponsorships				1,704.69	
1090	stamps for packets	-	-	142.80		
1100	Kinko's to ship packets	-	-	77.17		
	FedEx Kinko's printing			484.72		
1140	Art Exhibit (Islands in the Salish)					
1150	Digital Rights for conference artwork	-	-		-	
1160		-	-		-	
1170		-	-		-	
1180	Basecamp Account	-	-		49.00	
	TOTAL PROMOTION					\$ 1,753.69
2000	Conference Publications	Quantity	Unit cost			
2010	Paper Submissions	521	17.00		8,857.00	
2020	Management				-	
2030	Correspondence/Author Kits				-	
2040	Review meeting 10/29-30				610.19	
2050	Abstract Book on flash drive	990	12.25	12,127.50	13,387.50	
2060	Prep/Editing				-	
2070	Tax	-	-	#####		
2080	Shipping			154.61		
2090	Final Program				3,693.88	
2100	Prep/Editing				-	
2110	Printing	-	-			
	FedEx Kinko's - Program printing			374.87		
	Dept. of Printing-Program booklet	1,000	3.32	#####		
2120	Advertising	-	-		-	
2130	Proceedings (per hour)	150	85.00		12,750.00	
2140	Book Prep/Editing				-	
2150	Printing - Book	-	-		-	
	CD pre-mastering				-	
2160	CD - media, case, insert, replication	-	-		-	
2170	Shipping				-	
	Other					
2180	Student Posters printing				579.78	
2190	TOTAL CONFERENCE PUBLICATIONS					\$ 39,878.35
3000	Facilities and Equipment Rental					
3010	Meeting Space Rental				18,051.87	
3020	A/V Equipment & Services	Quantity	Unit cost			
3030	Screens	-	-		25,146.30	
3040	Data Projectors	-	-		-	
3050	Overhead Projectors	-	-		-	
3060	Microphone Rental	-	-		-	
3070	Other AV equipment rental	-	-		-	
3080	AV technicians/operators-Film Festival 2/10	-	-		1,844.28	
3090	Exhibits & Posterboards				11,716.80	
3100	Exhibit management and promotion	-	-		-	
3110	Printing - exhibit promo and materials	-	-		-	
3120	Exhibit Space Rental	-	-		-	
3130	Electricity	-	-		1,831.20	
3140	Exhibit Booths	-	-		-	
3150	Tabletop Exhibits	-	-		-	
3160	Security	-	-		-	
3170	Posterboard Rental	-	-		-	
3180	Signs and Banners				-	
3190	Banners	-	-		-	
3200	Event & Session Signage	-	-		-	
3210	Supplies & Misc. Equipment	-	-		-	
3220	On-Site Computer Rental	-	-		-	
3230	Other equipment rental	-	-		-	
3240	On-Site telephone line(s)	-	-		-	
3250	On-site internet access / broadband fees	-	-		5,982.73	
3260	Other	-	-		-	
3270	TOTAL FACILITIES & EQUIP. RENTAL					\$ 64,573.18

4000	Catering and Special Event	sales tax:	9.5%	gratuity:	18%		
		# persons	\$/person	plus tax/gratuity	# events		
4010	Auarium Food Minimum \$75	300	28.50	\$9,059.11	1	\$9,059.11	
4020	Aquarium Fixed Cost	-	-	\$0.00	-	-	
4030	Aquarium add'l past 200	200.0	8.00	\$0.000	1	-	
4040	Banquets / Dinners	-	-	\$0.00	-	-	
4050	Refreshment Breaks	-	-	\$0.00	-	-	
4060	Morning Breaks (95%)	1,120	8.00	\$10.34	3	15,098.19	
4070	Afternoon Breaks (95%)	1,120	5.00	\$6.46	3	6,997.38	
4080	Session Chair Breakfasts	30	17.00	\$21.964	3	1,550.52	
4090	Lunches (95%)	1,120	41.00	\$52.97	3	96,756.01	
4100	Film Festival	-	-	\$0.00	1	7,369.23	
4110	Poster Gala	-	-	\$0.00	1	42,167.19	
4120	Music for Poster Gala	-	-	\$0.00	-	-	
4130	Buses for Tours	-	-	-	4	1,664.67	
	Snacks for 4 tours	93.0	2.56			237.71	
4140	Other						
4150	TOTAL CATERING & SPEC. EVENTS						\$ 180,900.01
NOTES							
	DESCRIPTION						TOTAL
6000	Conference Materials	Quantity	Unit cost				
6010	Acknowledgement / Confirmation Packet						
6020	Letter/Envelope/Receipt	-	-			-	
6030	U.S. Postage	-	-			-	
6040	Non-U.S. Postage	-	-			-	
6050	On-site Registration Inserts	-	-			-	
6060	Name Badge / Badge Holder / Ribbons	1,179	2.00			2,358.00	
6070	Conference Bags (Donated by Metro Vancouver)	-	-			5,000.00	
6080	Souvenir	-	-			-	
6090	Other	-	-			-	
6100	TOTAL CONFERENCE MATERIALS						\$ 7,358.00
7000	Committee/Speaker Expenses						
7019	Facilitation - paid by Environment Canada \$12	-	-			12,000.00	
7038	Staff Travel/Mileage	-	-			250.00	
7057	Speaker Honoraria	-	-			-	
7076	Speaker Expenses	-	-			-	
	Jennifer Lash					756.73	
	Ann Seiter					426.82	
	Andrew Rosenberg					751.75	
7095	Planning Meetings						
7114	6/23/2008	-	-			605.37	
7133	10/7/2008	-	-			313.01	
7152	12/5/2008	-	-			271.28	
	4/3/2009	-	-			184.13	
7171	Student Awards	-	-			172.98	
	Bedol-Water clock	3	16.00	59.00			
	Verdant Computing-charger	2	49.99	113.98			
	2011 Free Passes	McIntyre Sarah					
7190	Gifts	-	-			2,619.25	
	Promo Media-Wine box	20	25.95	687.00			
	Boulevard Advertising-Tumblers	65	8.85	675.25			
	Sweet Water Cellars-Cyder	20	8.95	257.00			
	Kevin Paul-Paddle	20	50.00	1,000.00			
7209	TOTAL COMM./SPEAKER EXPENSES						\$ 18,351.32
	Greening the Conference						2,500.00
9000	Miscellaneous						
9010	Telephone & Fax	-	-			-	
9020	Copying	-	-			-	
9030	Express Mail/Postage/Freight	-	-			-	
	SWREG, Inc. - Regis. Backup					64.95	
9040	Delivery Services	-	-			-	
9050	Parking	-	-			400.00	
9060	Tim Corey-graphic recorder	-	-			4,900.00	
	Youram Bauman-Standup economist					1,500.00	
9070	Other	-	-			-	
9080	TOTAL MISCELLANEOUS						\$ 6,864.95
9500	Conference Management					48,419.09	\$ 48,419.09
9600	TOTAL EXPENSES						\$ 370,598.59
9800	Contingency 5% of Expenses						
9900	BALANCE						\$ 143,130.81

Appendix 6:

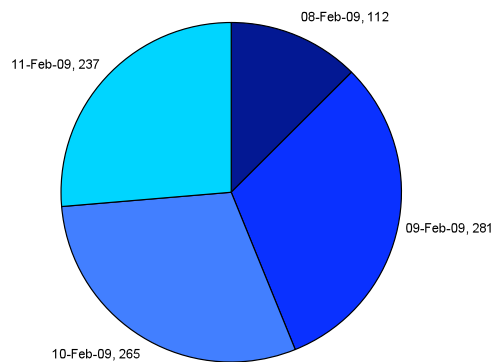
Evaluation Report for 2009 Puget Sound Georgia Basin Ecosystem Conference

2009 Puget Sound Georgia Basin Ecosystem Conference Evaluation Report

Drafted by Jennifer Wilson, Environment Canada

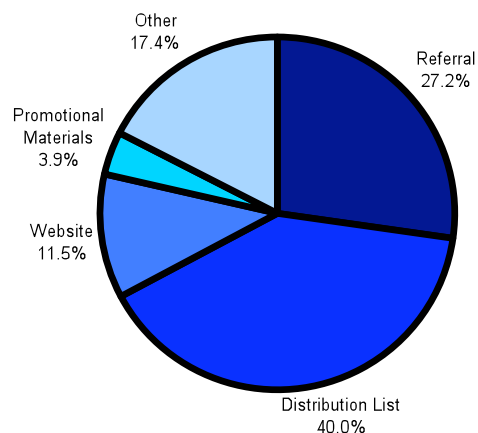
Two-hundred and ninety four people who attended the 2009 Puget Sound Georgia Basin Ecosystem Conference completed the evaluation survey. Most respondents attended the conference on February 9-10.

Number of Conference Attendees by Day



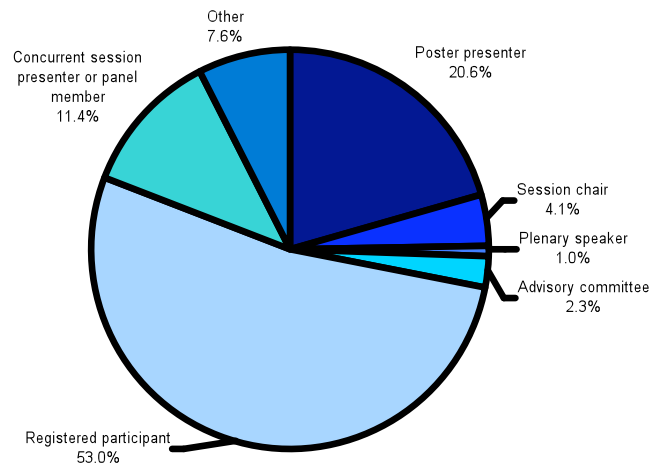
The majority of respondents indicated that they found out about the 2009 Puget Sound Georgia Basin Ecosystem Conference from distribution lists, referrals (word of mouth) or through attending past Conferences.

How Respondents were Notified of the Conference

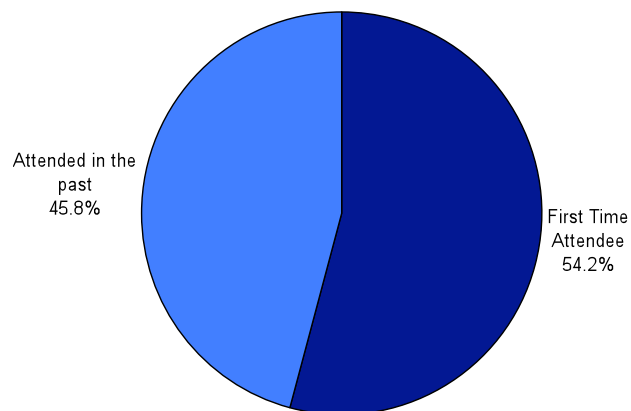


Most conference attendants were registered participants. Other conference roles included poster presenters, volunteers, judges, listeners, and field tour support.

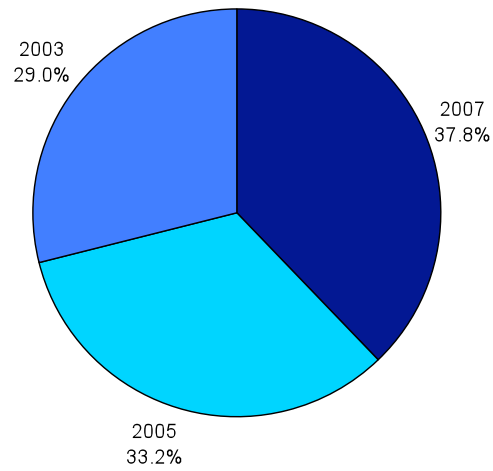
Respondents' Conference Participation



Respondents who have Attended Conferences in the Past

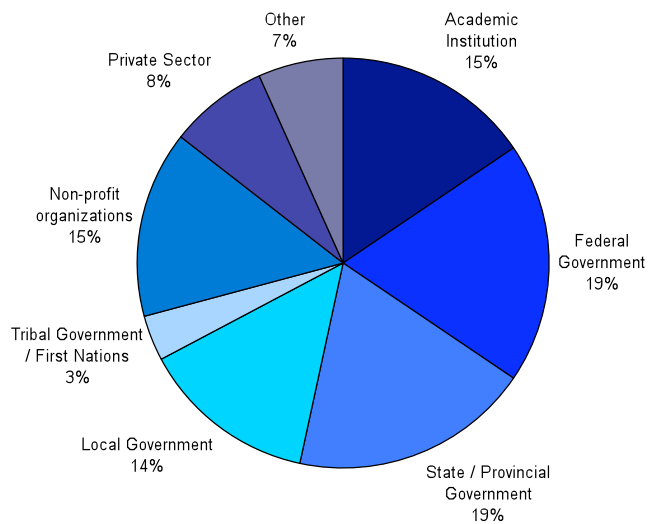


Conferences which Respondents have Attended in the Past

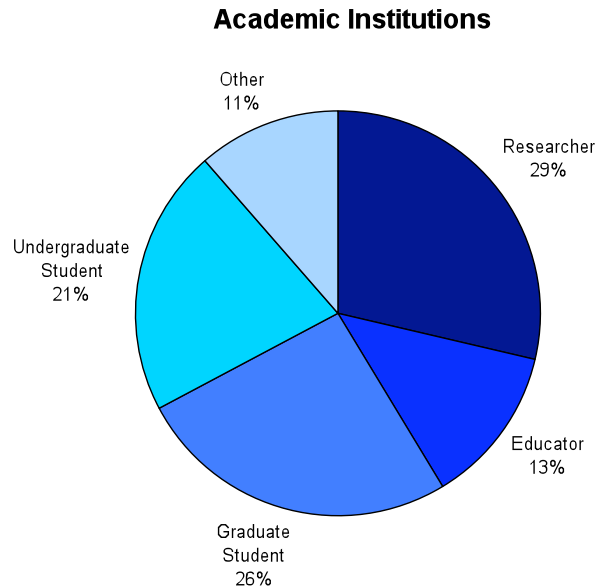


Respondents worked in a wide array of sectors. The largest sectors represented were federal and state / provincial governments.

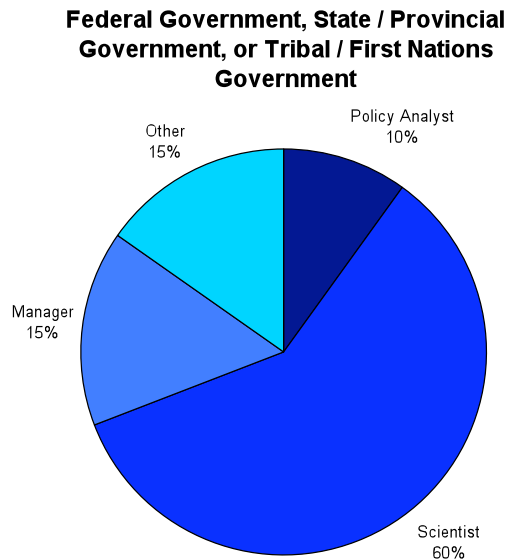
Sectors Respondents Work In



The majority of respondents who worked in academic institutions indicated that they were researchers or graduate students.

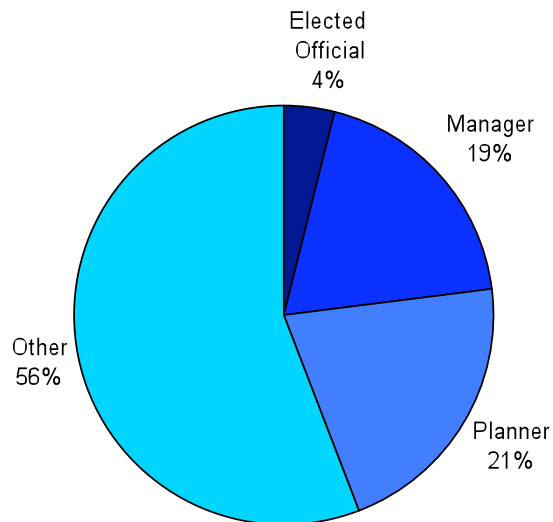


The majority of respondents who worked in federal governments, provincial / state governments, or Tribal / First Nations governments indicated that they were employed in scientific fields. A planner employment option should be added to subsequent conference evaluations.



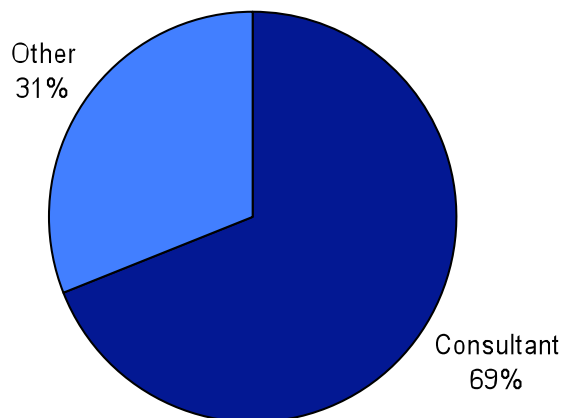
Many respondents who worked with local governments indicated that they were employed in the scientific or management / coordination fields. A scientific employment option should be added to subsequent conference evaluations.

Local Government



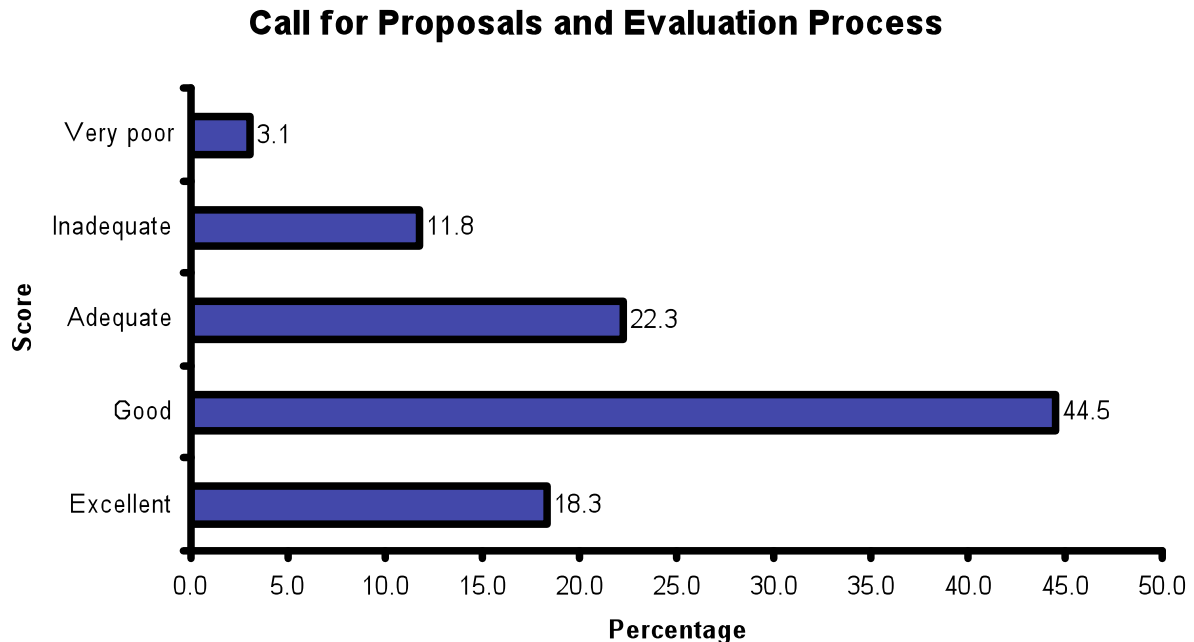
Respondents' who worked in the private sector were mainly consultants. Other occupations included educators, scientists or Georgia Basin Puget Sound area property owners. Subsequent conference surveys should include non-profit or NGO employment options for respondents.

Private Sector



1. Call for Proposals and Evaluation Process

Most respondents were satisfied with the Conference's Call for Proposals and Evaluation Process; over 60% of respondents felt these processes were good to excellent. However, some respondents saw the the proposal process as complex and felt that it required a too great of an investment of time before presenters knew if their proposals were accepted. This may have deterred some from applying. Additionally, some saw selection criteria as confusing. Respondents' comments on the processes fell into four general categories: timing, topic content, acceptance process and communications.



Timing:

- Schedule the Call for Sessions many months prior to the Call for Abstracts so that abstracts can be centred on confirmed sessions.
- Speakers' allotted presentation time should be longer as twenty minutes is a short period of time to present significant amounts of research.

Topic Content:

- Many comments focused on the Conference's new policy emphasis. Some felt that this change was too strong and the conference should reorient itself into a more scientific direction. Additionally, some scientists found it challenging to tie their research to specific policy advice in their abstracts.
- Presenter / panel coordination and quality were found to be mixed; not all sessions were well aligned with the conference agenda.
- It was highlighted that although air quality was advertised as a major conference theme, there were few sessions on this topic specifically.

Acceptance Process:

- Need to communicate that individual 10-minute oral presentations were not being accepted at the onset of the Call for Abstract process (i.e. prior to application).

- Unclear why some had multiple presentations when others did not have any.
- Many presentations were accepted as posters. Posters are not as effective as talks, especially given the poster number. A daytime poster session may increase participation and visibility. Some poster topic groupings were unclear.

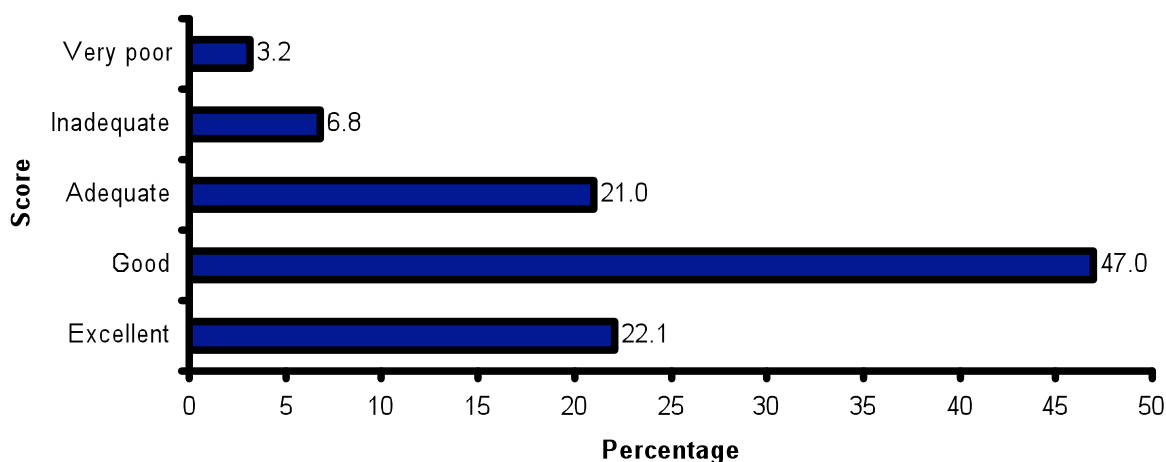
Communications:

- There was some confusion on whether submission deadlines were for oral presentations or symposia suggestions.
- Call for Proposals advertisement should be increased to ensure that interested parties have access to pertinent conference information.
- Website information was clear and email reminders / updates were effective.

2. Pre-Conference Communication & Materials

Respondents were pleased with Pre-Conference Communication and materials; nearly 70% of respondents felt that communication and materials were good to excellent. The Conference website was especially considered comprehensive and helpful. Many respondents felt that the final agenda should have been circulated earlier with a detailed presenters list; they thought that there was too little information available before the conference. Respondents' comments on Pre-Conference Communication & Materials fell into five broad categories: website, documentation, emails, timing, & other communication.

Pre-Conference Communication Pre-Conference Communication & Materials



Website:

- The website was a bit slow to be updated with the conference agenda and hotel information.
- It was difficult to locate the website when performing a search. Searches typically loaded up past conference proceedings, programs and announcements and no information about the 2009 conference. A new link should be established shortly for the 2011 Conference so that people can mark their calendars.

- Speaker information should be online. Given the general session titles, it was difficult to judge whether talks were relevant to policy, science, outreach, etc.
- Consider efforts to help coordinate carpooling or transit through the website.

Documentation:

- Create black and white printing options for documents to increase readability.
- There were many program printing mistakes, including incorrect names & talks.
- The lack of session information made available prior to the registration deadline made it difficult for registrants to know which days to register for.
- May be helpful to produce a registrant directory with names and affiliation.

Emails:

- To increase clarity, reduce the conference's points of public contact.
- Circulate a post-registration email to inform registrants of pre-conference events. Field trip emails to indicate that conference registration must occur before-hand.
- Circulate emails to registrants when new materials are available on the website.
- Consider circulating a "Call for Abstracts" to the University of Washington graduate student email list.

Timing:

- Ensure that session titles are not generic so it is easy for registrants to determine what will be presented.
- Increase the time to produce, publish and distribute conference materials.

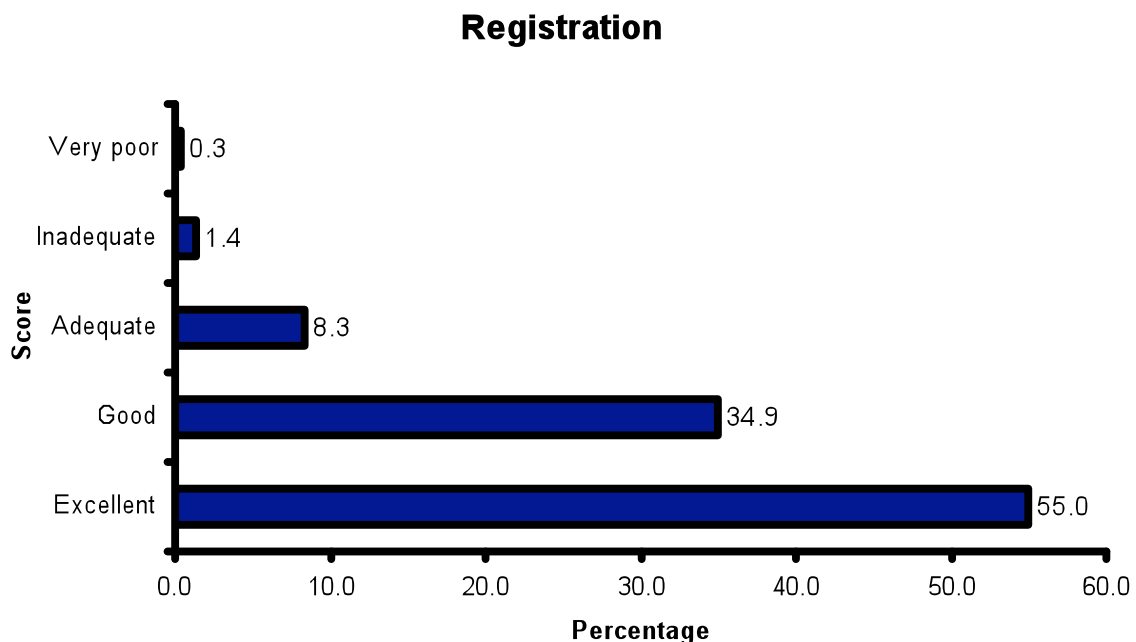
Other Communication:

- Communication with the organizers was not a fluid process, it was often difficult to tell what they were asking for, and details on how they wanted sessions planned were difficult to obtain.
- As a session chair, I found the organization leading up to the conference very poor. I communicated with about six different people, all of whom told me different things, and none of whom really knew what was going on. There were issues linking the abstracts of presenters in my session to the session proposal, and also conference organizers wanted to add unrelated talks to my session. Eventually it was sorted out but it was way more work than it needed to be.
- I found the tone of a lot of the material to be very condescending. Professionals do not need to be told to "speak loudly" for their presentations or have font sizes specified. There seemed to be an excess of unnecessary details like this, but the important information was hard to obtain (e.g., speakers were not told until very shortly before the conference when they would be presenting).
- There seemed to be confusion behind the scenes (i.e. mixed procedures messages). Also, presenters were asked to re-submit abstract information and biographies even though this occurred during the online submission process.
- Materials and guidance for sessions were good, but sent at last minute - goals & product guidance given so late it took a lot of work to achieve. Also, there was no clear information on outcomes/products or how the information would be used.
- Some were disappointed about prayer activities. A few people probably appreciated the sentiment, but some were uncomfortable.

- It was a confusing on how to adjust information submitted online for a presentation to fit the restraints of a poster. It would have helped if the automated fields could have changed so that information could be properly incorporated into a poster format.

3. Registration

The vast majority of respondents, nearly 90%, found the Conference's registration to be good to excellent; they thought that registration was fast, efficient, and friendly. Comments on the Conference's registration fee were mixed. Some commented that the fee was too high for non-profits, local governments, and individuals. Adversely, some environmental non-profit representative commented that they felt that the Conference was affordable. To help compensate for cost issues, organizers could offer free tickets for under-represented groups or expand the scope of scholarships to include non-academia. Respondents' didn't have many comments on how to improve registration.



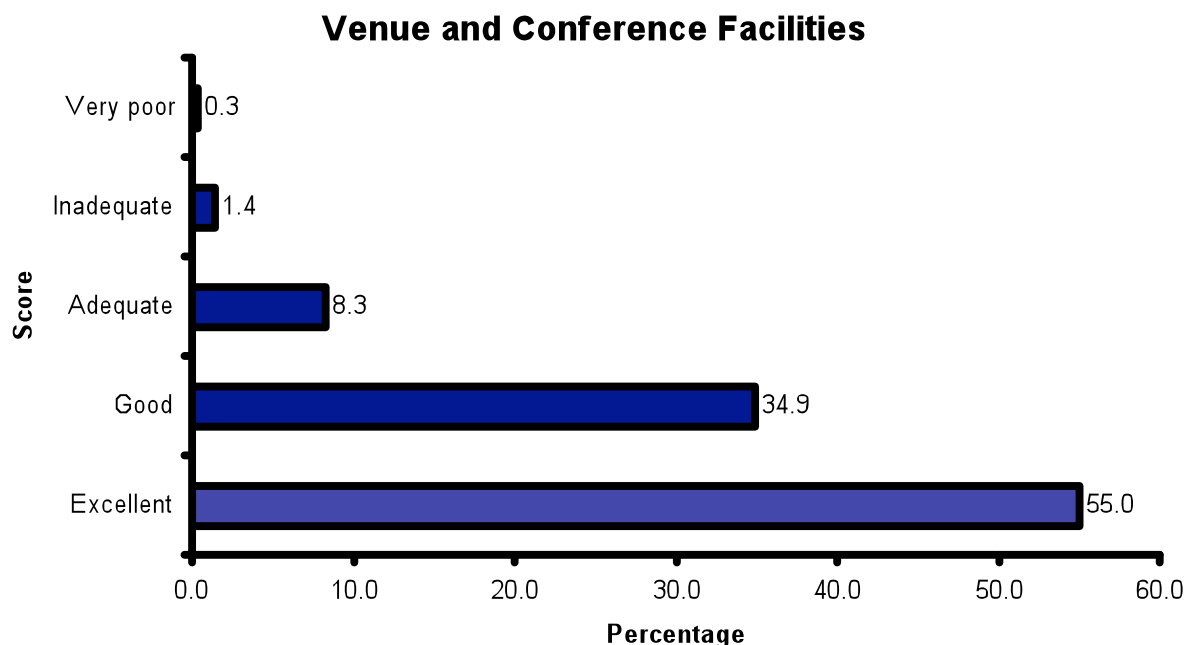
Improvements:

- The government approval system was complicated and could be improved.
- Improve the quality of black and white agenda copies as readability was difficult.
- Consider requiring Conference payment when abstracts are accepted so that all presenters know that they are fully registered.
- Include purchase orders as a method of Conference payment.
- Create a sign at the registration desk to notify participants that all of the Conference abstracts and biographies were on the complimentary flash drive.
- Create a bulletin board near the registration desk which outlines the day's schedule for a larger "day at a glance."
- Create more sturdy names tags for Conference participants with a bigger font.
- The Conference website should advertise the on-line registration deadline.

- Conference organizers should clarify “student” status for registration purposes; questions arose about thesis versus classroom credits for this qualification.

4. Venue and Conference Facilities including A/V

The vast majority of respondents, nearly 90%, found the Conference’s venue and facilities to be good to excellent. Specifically, one respondent commented “the facilities themselves were excellent - rooms were easy to find, A/V was working, poster hall and lunch area were welcoming, no lines at the bathrooms.” However, many respondents commented that many rooms were too small to accommodate the participants. Organizers should strive to better anticipate the talks which are likely to be better attended and schedule them in larger rooms. Respondents’ comments on registration fell into three categories: room size, technical, and other.



Room Size:

- Many rooms were too small for the number of people attending, leaving many people standing. To increase seating capacity:
 - Session facilitator should insist panel members to sit in their designated places up front.
 - Remove audience tables as they took up too much space.
- Some tables at the lunch venue were concealed from the line of sight of the speakers by structures.

Technical:

- Ensure that the room and computer equipment is set up prior to the session; perhaps designate student volunteers as A/V operators.
- It was unclear why talks were loaded in the AV room if they also needed to be loaded directly to the computer in the session room

- Some rooms were set up poorly with screen and speakers located apart
- Consider having larger video screens in the large session rooms
- Remind presenters to use the microphone or present to the audience directly.
- Presentation screens should be in the center of the room and the speakers should be off to the side.

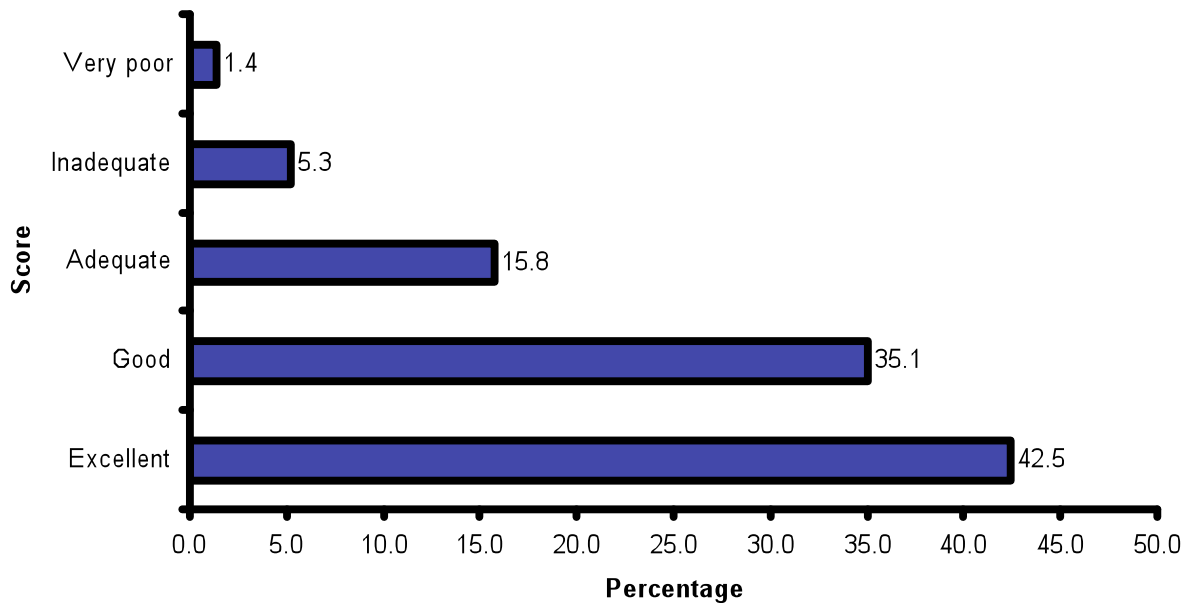
Other:

- Please provide map of convention center layout, rooms and parking, buses, etc. with the Conference package.
- Move recycling bins near rooms and not just in the registration area.
- Despite the field trips there seemed to be almost complete separation from the natural world inside the cavernous conference center. I realize the dilemma of needing to accommodate a large group and yet draw attention to the environment (i.e. natural light).
- Notify presenters of room size to ensure their presentation is adequate (i.e. font).
- Add more chairs in gathering areas to ensure seats between sessions
- I noticed several attendees with kids, particularly young women. This is very positive and should be encouraged by providing daycare if it becomes necessary.

5. Food and Refreshments

Most respondents found the Conference's food and refreshments to be good to excellent. Many commented that there was not enough coffee and tea during breaks; changes should be made to future conferences to ensure that coffee and tea is available throughout the day. Additionally, there were numerous comments that there should be snacks at the morning and afternoon breaks; some would have preferred sandwiches at lunch and fruit at breaks if cost was a factor. The food at the poster gala was very well received. Respondents' comments on registration fell into three categories: drinks, snacks, food and other comments.

Food and Refreshments



Drinks:

- I never had to wait for hot water for tea during the breaks, which was a fantastic departure from many conferences.
- The cost of alcoholic drinks was high at the poster session.

Snacks

- Healthy snacks during the morning and afternoon breaks would have been good instead of just the coffee and tea (i.e. baked goods, vegetables, fruit, cheese).

Food

- The food was excellent, but seemed a bit extravagant
- The fact that the food was local and sustainable (and delicious) was a great perk!
- Vegetarian meals were not as well received as non-vegetarian ones.
- Thank you for offering gluten-free and vegan. Lunch was good, but servers weren't aware of ingredients (salads with cheese) and refreshments still lacked gluten free or dairy free option. Ingredient labels on food at reception would help.
- Lunches were great for their social aspects, such as networking.
- Really appreciated the compostable cups and goal to cut back on waste.

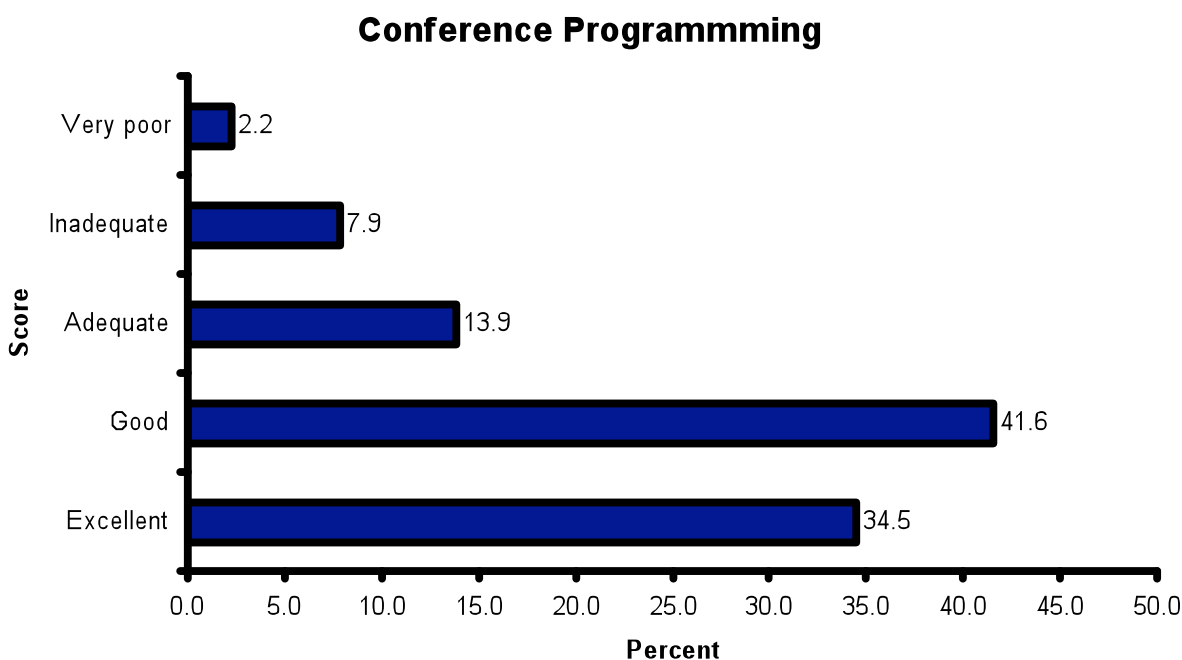
Other Comments:

- Suggestions:
 - Detail the exact food and refreshments served during the conference in pre-conference materials so that participants know what to expect.
 - Reduce registration fees for those who will not use meal services.
 - Ask attendees to bring their own cups to save on dishwashing
 - Add non-dairy options (i.e. soy milk, margarine) to meal options.
 - Ensure that gluten free food options have protein.

- Ensure that there is drinking water is available throughout the conference
 - Remove the dessert at lunch and provide a snack during the breaks.
- The food was wonderful, but the amount of excess silverware and plates on the table seemed very wasteful.
- Lunches were delicious but a bit too elaborate. The carbon footprint could be reduced with less silverware and plate ware.
- Though the food and refreshments were excellent, I was rather disturbed by the choices of food on the one hand and the call for social change for environmental improvement that seemed to be in direct conflict with some of the food choices. I think that if a conference focus calls for social change to improve environmental conditions, it should be reflected by the consistency of the venue throughout the conference. It seems hypocritical to say one thing and do another.
- Catering service and staff were excellent.

6. Conference Programming

The majority of respondents found the Conference's programming, over 75%, to be good to excellent. Many respondents made detailed comments regarding this aspect. Some felt that there were too many concurrent sessions, forcing them to miss interesting talks. Also, there was a call for longer talks so that the audience can get a deeper understanding of the topics presented. There were mixed responses on the Conference's new policy focus. Some requested a return to the previous scientific orientation, while others appreciated this shift. Generally, respondents' comments on conference programming fell into five categories: scheduling, length, content, science versus policy direction, and Call to Action.



Scheduling:

- I appreciate the wide variety of topics and presenters. The 1.5 hour time slots were perfect in terms of attention span and time spent sitting.

- Very difficult to catch specific talks in different concurrent sessions because not well coordinated time-wise. It was too much too quick, I would have liked to been able to attend more seminars that were scheduled concurrently.
- People should be limited to only one oral presentation so that others can present
- The conference days were laid out well. It all went smoothly as far as I saw.

Length:

- The organization of the sessions and talks was not good. The length of time of the talks was altered throughout the planning process, causing a range of talk lengths from 8 to 15 minutes for the talks that I saw. These short talks made it difficult to convey your message in such little time, and made it very hard to move between sessions as start of the presentations did not coincide with each other.
- I went to a session that was composed of seven 7 minute talks. All of the presenters went over their time limit, and everything seemed rushed. Although I understand that the people who propose sessions have control of how many talks/time limits, I feel that there should be general guidelines all must conform to. For a large conference with concurrent sessions, all talks should be the same length (e.g., 15 minutes, including questions). Sessions with longer talks were more enjoyable and I feel I that I got a lot more out of those presentations.

Content:

- Less time should be spent in plenary sessions, and more time to be spent in smaller groups talking about research.
- This was a strong and interesting program. Great work putting the panels together! Liked the variety and mix of "official" and "after hours" activities.
- Excellent variety of speakers. Next time please include speakers on environmental justice concerns for low income and minority communities.
- A session entitled "success stories" would be nice.
- Missing marine bird talks was conspicuous. Presence of tribal leaders in the plenary and closing ceremony was great and inspiring. Please keep that aspect next time. It's key to success in restoring this region.
- More Canadian participation would have been helpful and more interesting.

Science Versus Policy Direction

- Too technical for non-scientists. Not technical or not enough science for scientists. Too much emphasis on politics and policy at the expense of science.
- Need more sessions for policy makers. There was no connection between science and policy.
- Definitely liked the new format of few sessions focused on how science can inform management. I liked that sessions provided opportunities for discussion - this was always lacking in my experience with previous events. Not all sessions were as successful at engaging audience discussion to identify next steps. Maybe the conference organizers could develop better instructions to guide session chairs and presenters in this regard.

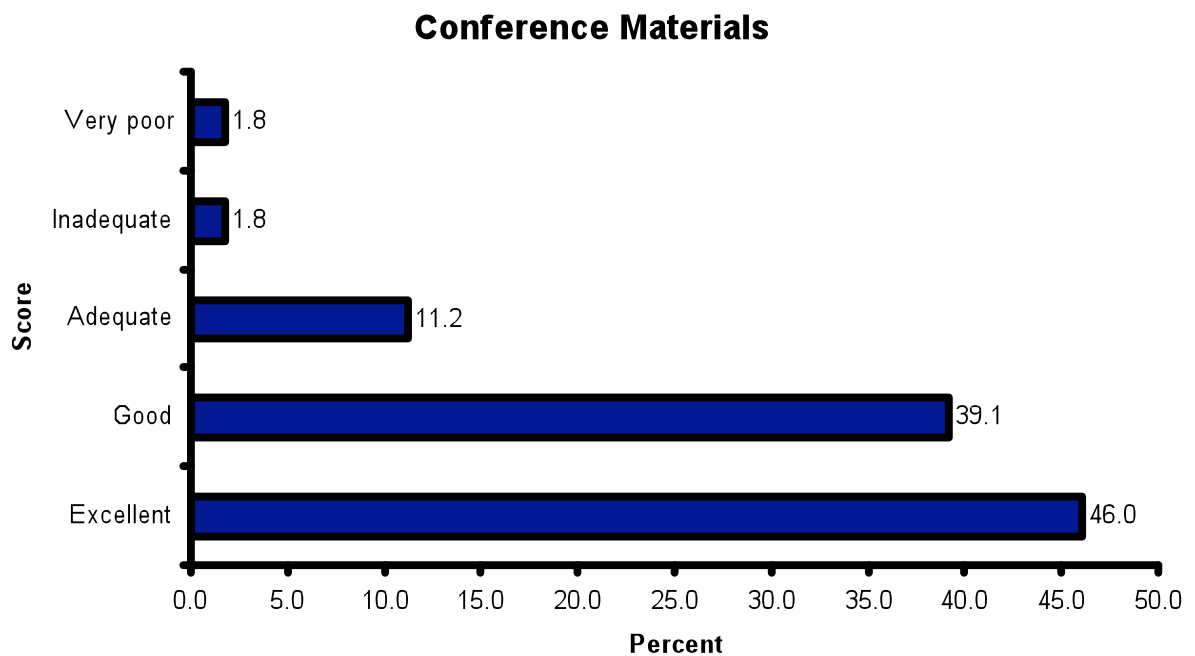
Call to Action:

- The call to action was a brilliant idea - forcing researchers to make linkages to management strategies.
- Call to action theme was a great idea, but would like to have seen a little more synthesis within each session (some sessions did this) to attempt to utilize knowledge of experts to prioritize action for a particular topic - and then invitation to audience to comment.
- Prefer more research underway or in progress relative to Calls for Action.

7. Conference Materials (i.e. flash drive, program, bag, handouts)

The majority of respondents, over 85%, found the Conference materials (i.e. flash drive, program, bag, handouts), to be good to excellent. Many respondents commented on the flash drive. They found that it was a unique way to reduce paper conference consumption. However, there were concerns with the lid closure which utilized magnets; some believed that the magnets could harm their computers.

Generally, respondents' comments on conference materials fell into five categories: flash drive, bag, Program and printed materials, Goodies, and Material quantities.



Flash Drive:

- Flash drives were clever, unique and attractive. They are especially useful for students. However, others questioned whether it was necessary.
- Flash drives pre-loaded with Conference material are a novel concept to reduce paper consumption. Organizers could also consider loading Conference material as a .pdf download on the website to further reduce waste. Alternatively, participants could bring their own flash drives to load up with materials while at the Conference.
- Flash drive magnets are concerning as they can negatively impact electronic media. Subsequent flash drives should have caps which do not require magnets.
- There were concerns with the flash drives as not all files could be opened.

- Flash drives are banned on FFD government systems (DOD/DOE etc.)
- Some participants questioned the environmental tradeoffs with distributing a flash drive that was made in China to reduce paper consumption. It may have been more appropriate to incorporate a flash drive that was made from materials originating from the Pacific Northwest, such as fir or spruce, as this would have benefitted local economy and have a reduced carbon impact.
- The flash drive size makes it difficult to use on some computers as it is too bulky to fit into some USB slots.

Bag:

- Mixed responses of the conference bag, some appreciated it, while others felt it was not useful. Could consider not including a bag in subsequent conferences to reduce materials and conference cost.

Program and Printed Material:

- All materials provided were helpful. The program was well designed and useful.
- Would be helpful to have presenter and attendee affiliations and contact information (i.e. email address) listed in the program as abstracts were unavailable in hard copy.
- Timothy Corey's graphic images captured the highlights of those sessions concisely and powerfully. I hope his image will be made available to all participants for future reference, to help us recall what we learned.
- Consider adding student contributions to conference materials.
- Publish conference abstracts earlier [on](#) the internet.
- Consider placing the conference overview in the middle of the program so that registrants open to it automatically.

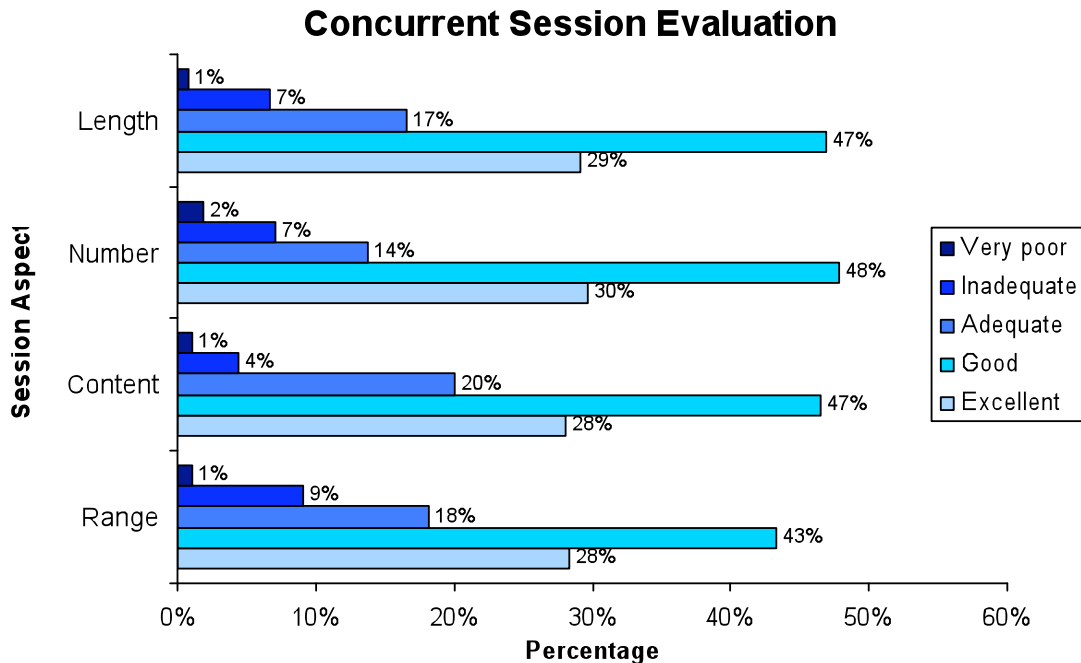
Goodies:

- Mixed feeling regarding the free gifts (swag); some look forward to it while others find it unnecessary.

Materials Quantity:

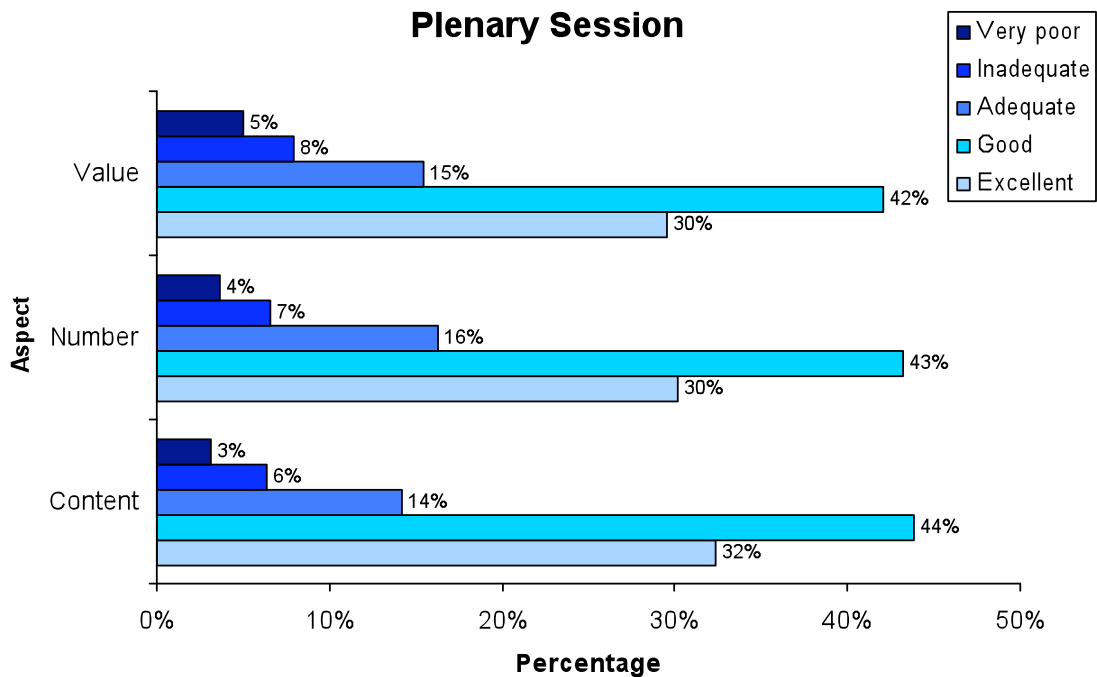
- Respondents indicated that conference materials were in short supply. Late and one-day registrants often did not receive the full compliment of conference materials.

8. Concurrent Sessions:



Concurrent Sessions were evaluated on four criteria, length, number, content, and range. The majority of respondents found the sessions to be good overall for all of the criteria. Some concurrent session topics overlapped, so similar research sessions were scheduled at the same time. There were mixed results on the number of sessions overall. Participants gave a long list of topics they wished to see presented at future Conferences (e.g. local remediation, wildlife, terrestrial systems / conservation, etc). The graphic recorder was well received. There was some resistance to the Conference’s new policy focus. Some sessions ran late and there was insufficient time for questions. There were mixed opinions on session length. Some participants believe that 1.5 hours was too long, while other disagreed. Organizers may wish to limit the number of presenters in a given session, so that their talk can be thoroughly presented and not rushed.

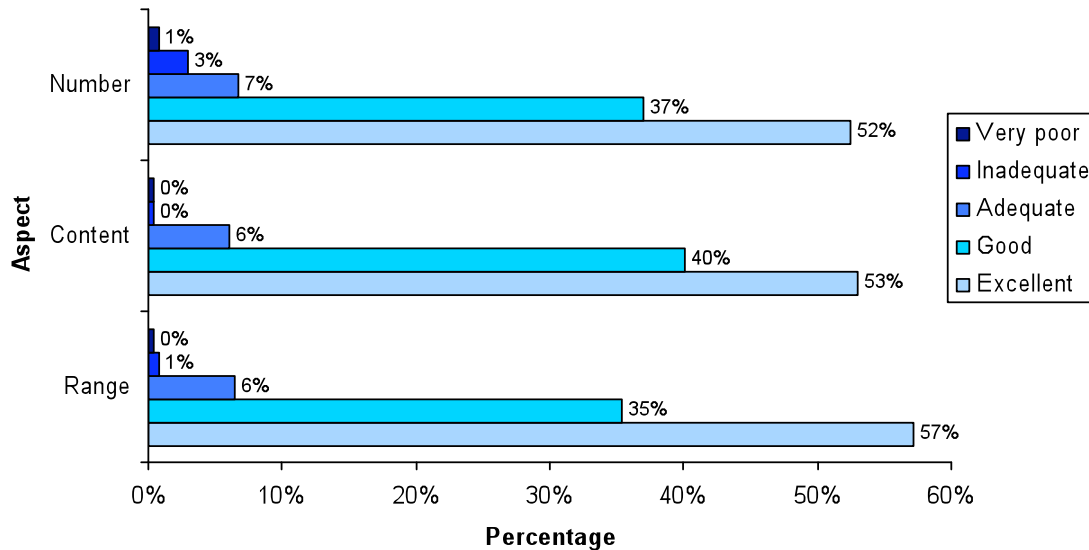
9. Plenary Sessions



10. Posters

The majority of survey respondents found the posters' number, content and range to be excellent. However, some respondents felt that there was insufficient time allotted during the conference to be able to view all of the posters. Organizers should consider adding another poster viewing session or having a long day time session. Additionally, individual poster numbers and a poster hall maps should be incorporated into conference materials so that participants can easily find posters. Lastly, circulating the posters as pdfs on either the memory stick or on the website would be greatly appreciated.

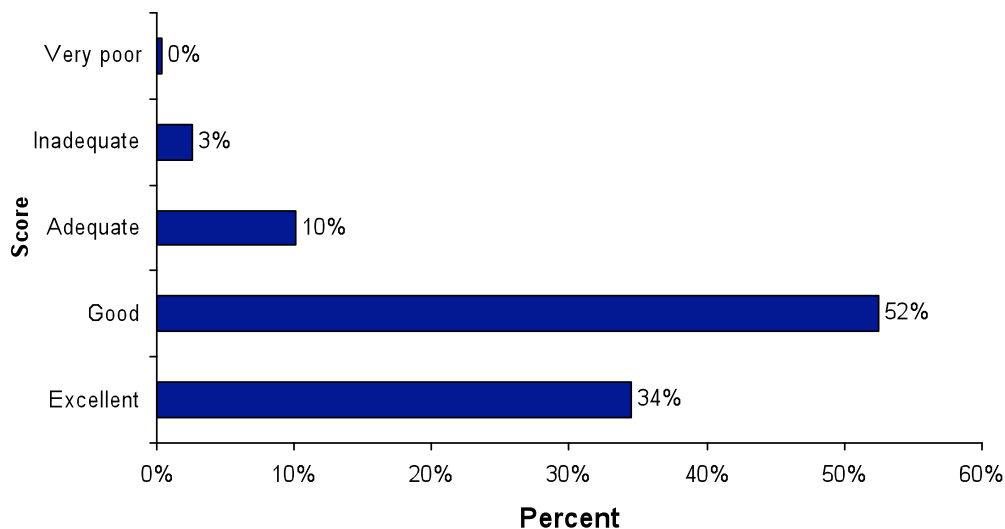
Posters



11. Length of Conference:

The majority of respondents found the conference length (3.5 days) to be good to excellent. Although there were many concurrent sessions and topics to discuss throughout the conference, a longer time frame would be more difficult to attend financially and in terms of time. Additionally, conference fatigue may start to effect conference participants if the conference was extended. Organizers should consider ending the last conference day earlier (between noon and 3:00 pm) to ease the travel burden for out of town participants.

Length of Conference



10. Biggest Factors in choosing a concurrent session

Most respondents used relevancy to their work or study as the main factor in choosing a concurrent session. Specifically, information or ideas that participants could take from the Conference and apply to their daily lives has a major determining session factor.

Expertise of speakers was also a decisive factor in determining sessions. Participants were more likely to attend sessions with presenters who were leaders in their respective fields. Lastly, participants chose sessions that had speakers with a diverse range of perspectives or representation (agencies, academics, First Nations).

11. Concurrent sessions which had the most value and impact for you?

There were six concurrent sessions which participants listed as having the most value and impact for them (listed with vote count).

- Climate change (29)
- Toxics and contaminant related sessions (21)
- Restoration related sessions / restoration of large river deltas (20)
- Citizen science (19)
- Salmon in the nearshore/ re-colonization of salmonids in other watersheds (18)
- Ecosystem Monitoring for Ecosystem Management (17)

On Restoration of Large River Deltas “This topic seems to need a lot of people working to do restoration work, and competing interests increase the need for solid research and policymaker collaboration.”

On Citizen science “it is very important to connect our science with local citizens so we make the finding relevant to them. This will help to drive support to the decision makers.”

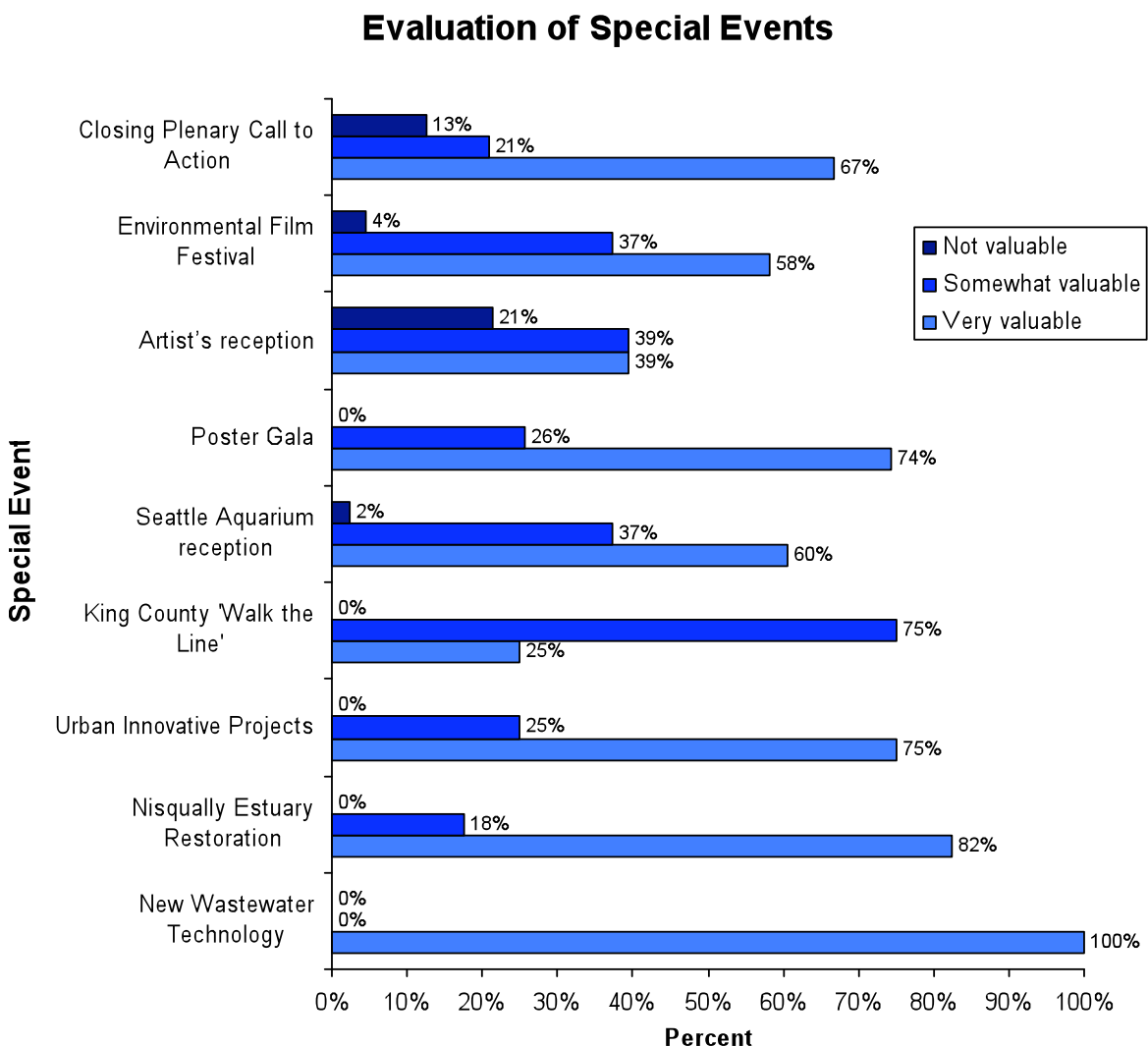
On Ecosystem Services “this sessions was the most informative for me...a nice diversity of presentations and discussion from people with a high level of expertise. It was meaningful for me because this is an area of great importance and also one that I am fairly unfamiliar with; the panel did a very good job of both framing the topic and of presenting information that was meaningful in the context of Puget Sound/Georgia Basin issues,” and “ the bottom line is that we are locked in a market-based economy. This is the paradigm that will shape and drive everything we strive to do. Market-based ecosystem valuation is a regrettable necessity for us. Regrettable because there is really no amount of money that can truly quantify a functioning ecosystem. However, we must speak that language in order to succeed.”

12. Value of Special events

Respondents found most special events to be valuable, especially the new wastewater technology session. One respondent indicated that “I loved all of the 'extra' elements that I was able to attend. They gave the conference a well-rounded feel and provided a variety of perspectives on the health of the region.” Few respondents ranked the special sessions as not valuable.

The Sunday tours would have been improved by an introduction on route. Additionally, there is a need for a sound system on location.

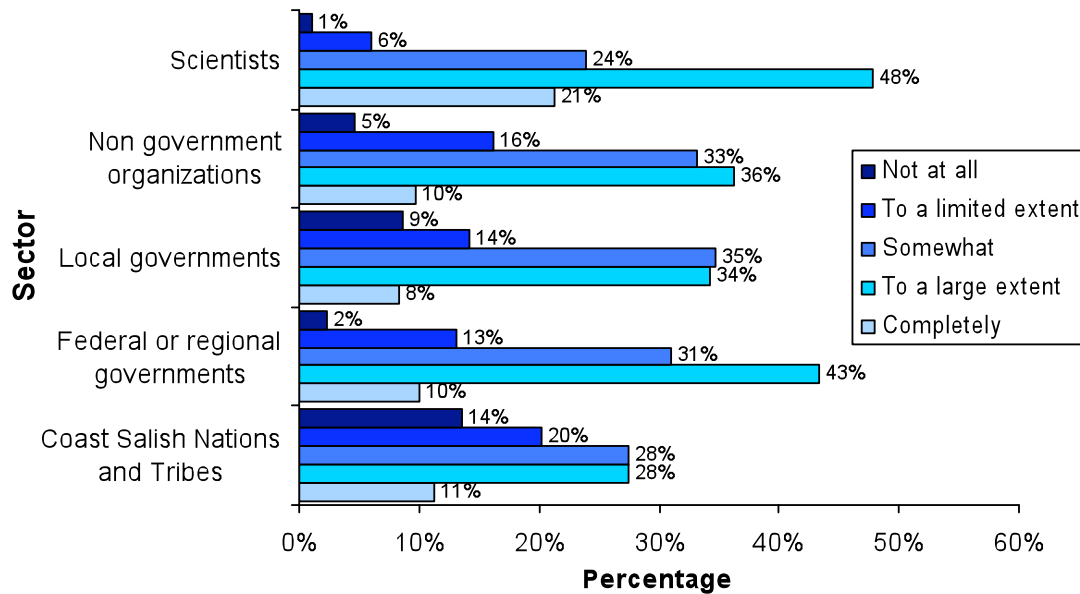
Reactions to the Closing Plenary were mixed. Some felt this session was powerful and unforgettable, while other felt it lacked substance and context.



13. Conference engagement, information sharing and discuss decision making value.

Across sectors, the majority of participants engaged somewhat with others. No specific sector was clearly engaged more effectively than another.

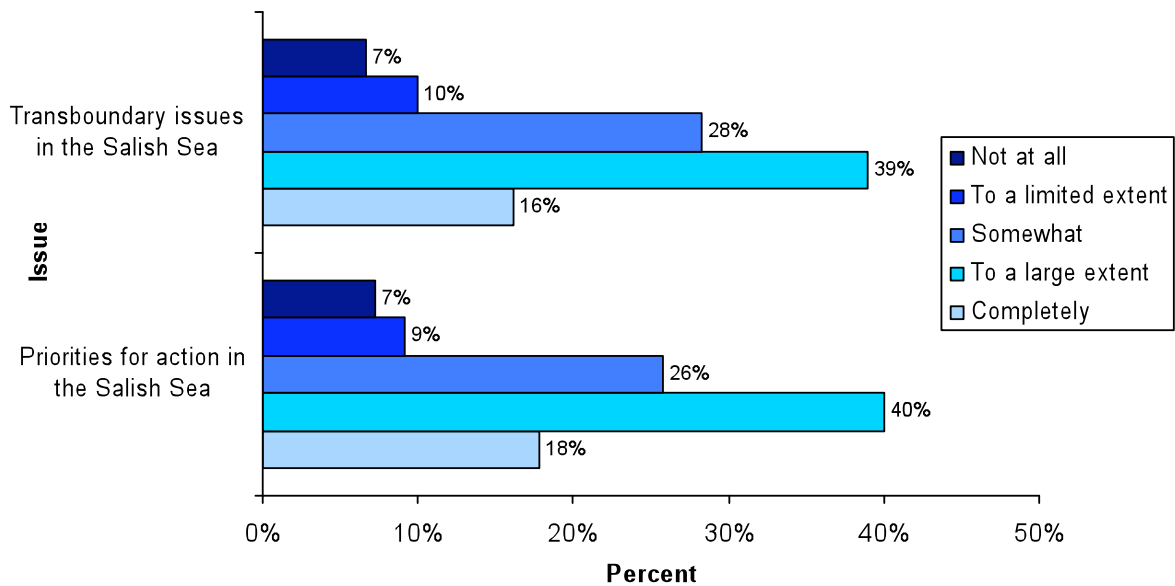
Engagement with other Sectors



14. Effectiveness of the Conference in Raising Awareness of Salish Sea Issues

The Conference raised awareness for two key Salish Sea issues, Transboundary and Priorities for action, for most respondents. Respondents noted that common interests and vision, partially shaped by attending this conference, will aid future communication across sectors. However, others did not feel a strong overarching sense of priorities between sessions. Another impediment to cross sector engagement is the limited number of local and Canadian conference participants; this lack of participation limits inter-sectoral dialogue.

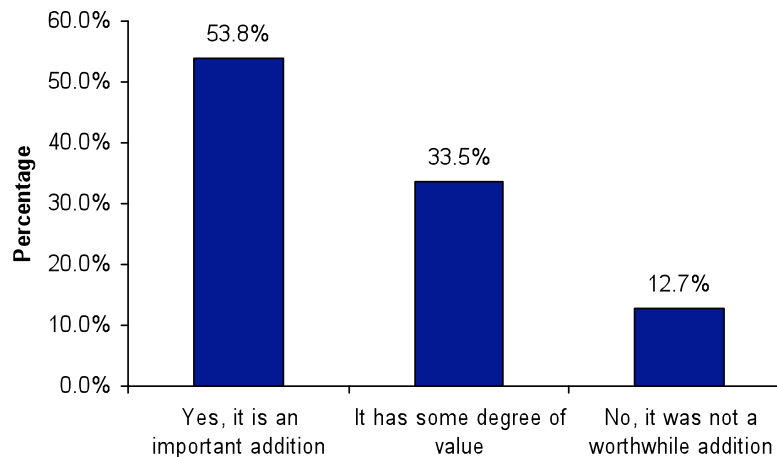
Effectiveness of Conference in Raising Awareness on Salish Sea Issues



15. Value of the Conference Call to Action

The majority of respondents left that the Call to Action was an important addition to the conference (53.8%).

Call of Action Value



16. Call of Action's Influence to respondents' work

The majority of respondents believed that the Call of Action would influence their work. For example, the Call to action will provide regional timeframes for local initiatives, help set priorities, and re-energize staff. One respondent wrote:

“The call for action clearly emphasized the need to work together across the border to resolve issues in common. It will allow me to pursue working with cross border partners with increased vigor. I believe it is incredibly important to revisit the Puget Sound/Georgia Basin international science panel's priorities for the Salish Sea and refine them if necessary. These new priorities will help focus our work across the border.”

However, some respondents value the Call to Action. They felt that the Call was too strategic and did not have enough operational examples. Some also believed that the Call was hollow as the message had been the same for decades. Lastly, some noted that more regulators and government agencies should have been present as it is them, not the scientists, who can affect real change. One respondent wrote:

“The Call to Action is a more appropriate conference for decision makers, not staff. Staff are painfully aware of the need for action and even which actions should be taken - until the people making the decisions are willing to take on tough choices it will never happen. And if the intent of the conference was really to start the process of taking action, having it during Washington's legislative season was a bad idea...The decision makers were otherwise occupied.”

17. Effect of Collaboration and coordination amongst session chairs and presenters

The majority of respondents appreciated the increase collaboration and coordination effort amongst session chairs and presenters. This way sessions were more coherent and integrated, with a noticeable reduction in gross overlap.

As a participant, the session presentations clearly built upon each other and it was evident that there had been an important dialogue amongst session presenters and panelists in advance of the conference. Out of the eight sessions that I participated in seven made very clear Calls to Action in their presentations or through the discussion period. There was also a lot more time dedicated to discussion - something that did not happen in my experience at the last conference (2007). As an organizer of a session, and a Call to Action lead, I can see that the work leading up to the conference and conversations in planning the sessions has advanced many projects and resulted in new initiatives and collaborations.

As a participant, I saw real value in sessions that had been well managed and offered a variety of perspectives along a common theme. I also thought the mandate to provide a consistent call to action from each session certainly focused the presentations and subsequent discussions.

However, not all saw this increased effort as helpful or beneficial to the conference. Many respondents felt that there were too many speakers per session, making the

presentations seem rushed and un-coordinated. Organizers should consider reducing the number of presenters per session and ensuring that session chairs leave enough time for audience questions / participation.

I am very fond of trying to encourage collaborations at meetings, but unfortunately at this meeting it was a very laborious and confusing process, mainly due to the inadequacy of advance guidelines and lack of communication from conference organizers. Collaborations happen at meetings anyway, the process of trying to force those collaborations at this meeting led to a waste of time.

The coordination of sessions was total failure for my work group. We submitted an oral presentation that was relegated to a poster. The presentation would have fit perfectly into concurrent session 3A. Our team, long-term presenters at the PS/GB conferences, felt disenfranchised and overlooked. You missed out on having good, relevant info in your session and the audience missed out as well. I really hope that session organizers have it better organized next time and can accommodate relevant important work being done in PS in more oral presentations. This was a huge disappointment for my team of scientists.

18. New partnerships, projects, or collaborations developed as a result of your attendance at this and/or past conferences. *(incomplete – see full data set)*

19. Biggest take away from this conference (i.e. Networking, shift in prioritization, information exchange). *(incomplete – see full data set)*

20. Future attendance at Puget Sound Georgia Basin Ecosystem Conferences

Future attendance at Puget Sound Georgia Basin Ecosystem Conferences

